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PRESS RELEASE

USAID supports new Haiti project for clean cooking solutions

PORT-AU-PRINCE, HAITI – The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is aiming to establish a sustainable local market and industry for clean cooking solutions in Haiti, a country whose high demand for charcoal has contributed to widespread deforestation.

USAID recently announced an award to Chemonics International to implement the three-year Improved Cooking Technology Project. Through close coordination with the Government of Haiti, the Haitian private sector and Haitian civil society, the project will establish a thriving local market – on both the supply and demand sides – as well as a sustainable industry for clean cooking solutions, including Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) and more efficient biomass cookstoves.

The use of firewood and charcoal in Haiti by individuals and small businesses has increased pressure on local natural resources and the environment. This reliance on charcoal is a major reason why forests now cover less than 2 percent of the country.

“The goal of the Improved Cooking Technology Project is to decrease Haiti’s consumption of charcoal by establishing a sustainable market for clean, efficient and affordable cooking solutions,” said USAID/Haiti Mission Director Carleene H. Dei. “Without the protection of natural, wooded watersheds, Haiti’s denuded hillsides leave the country vulnerable to erosion and devastating flooding.”

In addition to the environmental degradation caused by the inefficient production and consumption of solid fuels, the use of traditional stoves and fuels can lead to health problems as well. According to the World Health Organization, exposure to smoke from traditional cookstoves is one of the five most serious health risks facing people in poor, developing countries. Nearly 2 million people die annually from respiratory illnesses caused by inhaling smoke produced by unclean cookstoves. Women and young children are disproportionately affected, as they spend more time in proximity to the harmful smoke.

Urban households and food vendors also spend a considerable portion of their incomes on charcoal, which often is produced and consumed inefficiently. By promoting more efficient charcoal cookstoves and LPG, the project will help users to consume less charcoal to meet the same cooking needs and enable them to save more of their income for other purposes.

USAID’s \$7.2 million project in Haiti will support and develop viable for-profit businesses in the production and distribution of improved charcoal cookstoves and LPG stoves. Large charcoal consumers will be targeted for conversion to LPG. The project will target nearly 10,000 street food vendors in Port-au-Prince, along with about 800 schools, orphanages and other energy-intensive entities in and around the capital. USAID will also assist the Government of Haiti in building a legal and regulatory framework for LPG, including developing and adopting rules to

ensure safety, developing appropriate licensing regimes, discouraging predatory commercial practices and encouraging investment. In addition, by promoting more efficient charcoal stoves that produce less greenhouse gases, the project will be able to earn additional revenues that will go toward reducing the costs of stoves to customers and further expanding the improved cookstove market.

This activity reflects USAID's support of the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves, a public-private partnership led by the United Nations Foundation. USAID is a founding partner of the Global Alliance, which seeks to encourage the adoption of 100 million clean stoves around the world by 2020. USAID's commitments to the Global Alliance focus on efforts to improve commercialization of the cookstove sector, provide stoves to displaced populations and reduce exposure to indoor air pollution.

"People have cooked over open fires and dirty stoves for all of human history, but the simple fact is they are slowly killing millions of people and polluting the environment," remarked Secretary of State Hillary Clinton during the launch for the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves. "The results of daily exposure can be devastating: Pneumonia, the number one killer of children worldwide, chronic respiratory diseases, lung cancer and a range of other health problems are the consequence. By upgrading these stoves, millions of lives could be saved and improved."

Read more about the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves: <http://cleancookstoves.org/the-alliance/>

Read more about USAID's work in Haiti: <http://haiti.usaid.gov>

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