



Solar Cooking The Netherlands-KoZon Newsletter Number 5, December 2019

Solar Cooking KoZon

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Blok and Alewijn van Asperen



Cooking demonstration near the largest slum of Nairobi (Shammah Centre, Kenya)

Solar Cooking KoZon extends its best wishes for the
holiday season !

Once more many new initiatives and projects

After about 18 months as president of this beautiful foundation, I look back on an inspiring and educational period. With a small group of enthusiastic volunteers, we endeavour to further disseminate cooking with solar energy and the use of other sustainable cooking methods in East and West Africa. Our business approach creates employment and economic independence, above all aimed at the improvement of women's well-being.

Unfortunately, the West African countries of Mali and Burkina Faso, where we are presently engaged, experience a state of unrest which makes it sometimes difficult to properly monitor our local initiatives and projects. In these difficult circumstances particularly, our support and advice are important in order to maintain employment and to improve the situation of the less fortunate.

A number of promising new initiatives and projects has started in Kenya and Uganda. Together with our local partners in these countries we attempt to expand integrated solar cooking. Our business approach appears to slowly bear fruit although significant differences continue to exist between the various projects.

I would invite you to read the more detailed project reports from our project coordinators further on in the newsletter.

Thank you for your support: it is of the utmost importance for us

For us to be able to continue doing our work, we need funds. Fortunately, we are supported by a large number of faithful contributors and donors. But, we experience a decrease in the number of donors as do other Dutch charitable organisations. We are very fortunate to have received financial support for a number of projects from funds and organisations.

Death of Drs. J. Bos, member of the Committee of Recommendation

Last summer we received the sad news that our member of the Committee of Recommendation, Mr. J. Bos had passed away at the age of 87. As former ambassador to Ethiopia and the Sudan he was very much committed to the activities of our foundation. We are grateful for his involvement in and commitment to support integrated solar cooking in Africa.

Help needed to find new volunteers

I would like to take this opportunity to ask for your help in finding new volunteers for our foundation. We urgently need a communications specialist and a project coordinator who are willing to volunteer. Should you know of someone in your area who would like to help us and who would have the time, we would like to hear from you. For more information you can contact our secretariat: secretariaat@solarcookingkozon.nl

Finally, I wish you a happy holiday season and a successful and healthy 2020!

Caspar Baltussen, president



Acceptance of cheque from Charity Shop Sliedrecht by Henk Blok (l) and Caspar Baltussen (r)

Projects in West Africa

MALI

By Sandra van der Berg, project coordinator

Togo Tilé, Segou

The sales figures of the solar cooking enterprise Togo Tilé in Segou continue to be impressive. In the first half of 2019, Togo Tilé sold no less than 5013 hay baskets, 123 CookKits, 462 solar boxes, 12 large parabolic reflectors, 43 solar dryers, 507 wood-saving ovens and 201 solar lighters. With 80 employees and a monthly turnover of over 2000 Euro, the enterprise is bursting at the seams. A reason for manager Seydou Coulibaly to request support from PUM. PUM, Netherlands Senior Experts, is a volunteer organisation focused on the sustainable development of small and medium enterprises in developing countries and emerging markets. In May of this year an economic PUM expert spent two weeks with Togo Tilé. He sees a fast-growing enterprise with a small profit margin. Seydou is at the heart of an enterprise that he manages as a one-man business even though this is in fact no longer the case. It makes the enterprise vulnerable. PUM's recommendations help us support Togo Tilé's further development.

SCK made no financial investments in Togo Tilé in 2019. Only funds for a documentary and an advertising spot were made available. Thus, we hope to inspire people in other African countries to establish solar cooking enterprises. The footage for the documentary is ready. We are now waiting for the final product.



Footage for the documentary about Togo Tilé

HSB (Handicap Solidaire Burkina)

The official start of the second phase of Handicap Solidaire Burkina Faso's solar cooking project was held in August 2019. For this phase the following activities have been planned: construction of a hangar for production activities, production and sale of 75 CookKits, 75 hay baskets and 15 solar boxes, training of the manufacturing and sales persons, and sales demonstrations.

The hangar has now been built and production has started: the production includes 35 CookKits, 34 hay baskets and 12 solar boxes. Sales have started and solar boxes are particularly popular. HSB has already sold 10 solar boxes and 2 hay baskets.

Considering its recent start, HSB is quite active as far as marketing is concerned. HSB board members use the solar cooking products at home and in the office, thereby setting a good example. They also try to attend as many trade shows as possible to promote solar cooking products. Together with the other partner in Burkina Faso, le Bon Samaritain, they have created a consultative structure to enable the two organisations to advise each other about developments in their respective enterprises.



Official start of HSB project phase 2

BURKINA FASO

By Carja Butijn, project coordinator

The project in Tanghin is very much alive but develops slowly. It shows how difficult it is to establish a solar cooking project as a social business in an environment where illiteracy is high and economic activity is very low. The will to succeed is very much present but this does not necessarily immediately translate into improved purchasing power or the capability to elevate marketing activities to a higher plane.



The small shop is now open and attracts clients

At a number of existing shops in the larger surrounding cities, sales outlets have been opened and turnover is expected to increase. The project has been extended to a second contract year. It gives the participants more time to set up a viable production and sales enterprise. A contract for the third and last year of the project is now being prepared. It focuses among other things on the transport of materials and products. This is a recurring subject for most projects and a discussion point within SCK.

The project also provides education for the female members of the project team.



Production of hay baskets

The drafting of a project proposal for a second village (Lintiba), possibly in an even more complex environment, requires time and creativity. Still this year Carja Butijn will pay another short visit to Burkina Faso to sit down again with the most important project representatives in order to discuss any remaining ambiguities. We hope to be able to start at the beginning of 2020.

Projects in East Africa

KENYA

By Henk Blok, project coordinator

The 'social business' projects (Didacus Odhiambo of Farmers With A Vision /'FWAV' in Bumala, West-Kenya, and Samuel Odhiambo of Asulma Centre in Nairobi) are running smoothly. But the climate changes here as well: the rainy season starts later which is bad for the harvest. Bad weather is increasingly more common which in turn is not good for solar cooking. Both projects almost break even but continue to need support for their working capital and the financing of instalment payments for solar cooking appliances (most customers are poor).

At the beginning of 2019, two new one-year pilot projects were initiated. One at Homa Bay (West Kenya, close to lake Victoria) headed by Daniel Yongo of The Oasis Of Life Self Help Group (TOOL SHG), who is very active in community work, and one in Nairobi on the edge of the largest slum (Kibera), where Jemimah Mweu is head of the Shammah Centre school. Both projects are going through the learning process.

Solar cooking appliances

At all partner sites, women make hay baskets (which provides them with income). Hay baskets save energy: food that was cooked in the afternoon does not need to be heated again in the evening. Henk Blok has had extensive contact with Roger Haines (California) of the Haines 1 and 2 CookKits. These Cookers are an interesting alternative to the models used until now because they don't use the (forbidden) plastic bags and last longer. Our partners are able to acquire the Haines Cookers in Nairobi as a (simple) kit that they can assemble and sell locally.

The aluminium foil used for the reflective surfaces of the Solar Boxes and the Conical Cookers is rather fragile. Quite some time ago we (here in the Netherlands) received a number of aluminium foil rolls, used for fruit juice packs and which is much stronger. We have sent sufficient supply to our partners in Nairobi to last a number of years.

Briquettes

All projects have now included the production of briquettes made from charcoal waste. Of course, this is not solar cooking but it does save wood and charcoal ('Waste no waste'). Street children gather grit and small pieces of charcoal for a small amount per bag. This is mixed with starch, sawdust and paper scraps (in Nairobi from offices), pressed into briquettes and dried. Briquettes are very popular (in particular in Nairobi where huts are sometimes

built so close together that solar cooking becomes difficult), because they burn more evenly than charcoal and are cheaper as well.

Transport

Thanks to a generous gift from Charity Shop Sliedrecht, Didacus in Bumala was able to buy a good second-hand pickup truck. He is very happy with it and so are we. Didacus had problems with the transporter who was driving him and his team to the marketplaces in neighbouring areas. Expensive and unreliable. To have his own transport in Nairobi, would also help Samuel but our regular budget does not allow this.



The new pickup truck made possible by Charity Shop Sliedrecht

Alewijn van Asperen and Henk Blok visited the four projects (see travel report below) in March. An educational visit for both parties, but above all heart-warming when one sees the commitment of the partners and their teams, often under difficult circumstances.

UGANDA

By Alewijn van Asperen, country coordinator East Africa

Project visits

At the beginning of 2019, our project coordinator Theo Sinke travelled to Uganda. He visited four Solar Connect Association (SCA) establishments: Kampala, Biharwe, Gulu and Kamuli. The latter two operate under SCA's name but are independent. He also visited to prospective new partners: WISE in the Sheema District and another one in Jinja. Both have now submitted an ISC project proposal (see follow-up).

Solar Solve, Kamuli

Robert Kyabire's enterprise Solar Solve started in September 2018 with our support. He promotes and sells ISC products that he gets from SCA. Solar Solve's sales figures are well above expectations. Robert mainly sells CookKits, hay baskets and some wood-saving ovens.

Jinja Renewable Consult Ltd, Jinja

The proposal from Jinja was made by Miss Maimuna Nangobi. She became acquainted with solar cooking products in Kamuli through Robert Kyabire, with whom she trained subsequently. She is expected to start her small business Jinja Renewable Consult Ltd as a one-year ISC pilot project this month, thanks to our financial support. She gets her products from SCA just like Solar Solve.

Wealth Initiatives Society Empowerment (WISE), Kabwohe town, Sheema district



In August we brokered a deal with WISE to co-sponsor the project proposal 'Clean and Energy Efficient Cooking Program'. The proposal was created after a visit by this

¹ ISC = integrated solar cooking

group to SCA, with a request for support for their ISC programme.

The first step has been made: five ladies from five different communities received basic ISC training at SCA in Biharwe. Each lady received two cooking appliances.



Training by SCA/ Mukasa Kawesa

The next step would be that the women organise an ISC demonstration day in their own community in order to further scale up. SCK pays for a large part of SCA's costs, about € 1,000. Triodos Foundation bears the costs of the local WISE organisation, approx. € 2,500.

Solar Connect Association (SCA)

Apart from its own sales results (in the Biharwe and Kampala areas), SCA also benefits significantly from deliveries to the two independent partners, in particular the one in Kamuli. Moreover, as in the previous year, SCA sold a large number of parabolic cookers, hay baskets and solar dryers to a Sudanese partner. In Uganda, parabolic cookers are too expensive for most people, but thanks to an external sponsor, SCA was able to outfit a whole village in North West Uganda with parabolic cookers.

This summer SCA opened a solar cooking restaurant at their production site in Biharwe. We have put on hold the request for financial support (for further fittings). At this stage we need more information and a better picture of the viability of this unique concept.

Travel report Kenya

In March Alewijn van Asperen and Henk Blok paid a working visit to Kenya. They attended the three-day 2019 Afrishiners workshop in Eldoret which is organised each year by the German organisation Lernen, Helfen, Leben. In addition to participants from Kenya, two participants from Uganda, one from The Congo and one from South Africa attended as well. All participants from Africa (about 25) are

small entrepreneurs or promoters of Integrated Solar Cooking ISC.



Afrishiners workshop 2019 in Eldoret, Kenya

Besides the presentations, the workshops focused on the acquisition of practical knowledge. This year for example, the participants were able to make themselves a solar box or a new type of improved wood-saving oven. Every day various solar cooking appliances were used to prepare lunch dishes and rolls.

Alewijn took the opportunity to explain SCK's working practices. His message was "Find and support ISC promoters in order to get social business projects under way". Henk gave a presentation about the various solar cooking appliances and what they mean in terms of 'cooking power'. New contacts led to two new project proposals, one from Kenya and one from The Congo. Because of a tight budget in 2019, the proposal from The Congo has been moved to 2020. The proposal from Kenya was rejected because of its unrealistic financial underpinning. In addition to the workshop, Alewijn and Henk visited the four Kenyan SCK partners.

From the travel report:

"We travelled by (regular) bus, by packed buses, on the back of a motorcycle. At all the projects we reviewed the reporting and the accounts, gave technical advice on the production and use of the solar box and the conical cooker. From time to time the carpenter (solar box) or the tinsmith (conical cooker) were summoned.



Production hay baskets in Shammah Centre

Didacus from FWAV took us on a field trip: on the back of the motorcycle, to visit solar cooker users. We saw a woman who has been using her first CookIt for many years but whose husband sticks to the old cooking habits, on a 3-stone fire, to prepare corn porridge in the traditional way. In Asulma and Shammah we were shown how their assistants make their own hay baskets.

At TOOL we participated in a solar cooking demonstration day for the community, including a tent for guests and the hostesses who completed the day with a large meal (unfortunately cooked on wood fire).

An ample 'mama' urged us to eat much more ("we were too skinny, we should stay a while").



Cooking demonstration TOOL in Home Bay

Income and expenditure in 2019

(as at 31 October 2019)

1. Donations (in Euro)

	Income in 2018	As at 31 October 2019
Individuals	25,610.55 *	5,373.05
Organisations	5,905.95	15,299.10
CookIt sales	390.00	120.00
Earnings on Savings Account	0.43	0.00
Total	31,906.93	20,792.15

*including an annuity donation of € 10,000

2. Expenditure (in Euro)

	Expenditure in 2018	As at 31 October 2019
Projects	41,244.17	29,580.40
Overheads	3,020.00	2,152.74
Total	44,264.17	31,733.14

Despite a number of large donations from among others the Charity Shop Slidrecht and the Foundation World Shop Laren, our income is under pressure. It is difficult to find new donors and sponsors, given our small group of volunteers. Fortunately, we have many faithful donors to whom we extend our sincere thanks for their constant financial support.

How can you support Solar Cooking KoZon?

You can transfer a donation to one of our two accounts.

On our website you can download a tax authority form if you wish to make a periodic or an annuity donation. Solar Cooking KoZon has been recognised as an 'Institution for General Benefit' (ANBI).

Bank:

NL 06 TRIO 0254 7056 34 in the name of Solar Cooking KoZon
NL 57 ABNA 0404 8116 71 in the name of Solar Cooking KoZon

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