

Mount Kenya Energy Project



July 2009 in Kenya

This is how it began ...

At the **Agricultural Show** in Kisumu / Western Kenya I visited the information stand of **Solar Cookers International**.

They exhibited different types of **solar cookers** as well as **fuel-saving clay stoves** and **retained-heat cookers (basket cookers)**.



Many areas of Kenya were affected by drought after three consecutive years of insufficient rainfall.



On the slopes of Mount Kenya

For two weeks, I visited friends



Mugo is a **teacher** and a **farmer**.
He grows bananas, tea and coffee.



Eggs from the solar cooker

There was great interest
in the **Cookit** and the
basket cooker
I had brought.

- **Cooking with the sun!**
- **Saving time in which other chores can be done!**
- **Using less firewood and saving the environment!**



Cooking as a hazard to women's health

Most women in rural areas use **wood** and **cook on open fires**.

Their **kitchens** often have **poor ventilation** and are **full of smoke**.

Women and children have to **collect firewood** and carry their heavy loads home – often for several kilometers.



New ideas put into practice

The kitchen house gets a **chimney**.

At a pottery shop, we buy a **fuel-efficient portable stove** and **clay liners** for building a permanent clay stove.



The start of a new project

About **40 women** from the area have come for a **demonstration**.



They listen patiently...

..... but soon they get **hands-on experience**.

The women try out the **basket cooker** and build a **clay stove** in the kitchen house.



Appropriate technology

Two days after our successful demonstration the first woman has built her own **retained-heat cooker** from an **old plastic bucket**!

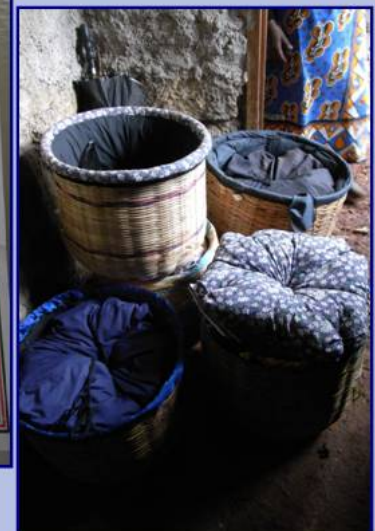


After my departure, the **Gaketha Laura Energy Saving Group** is founded.



April 2010 – a warm welcome back

Since my first visit, the women have been very active. They have made basket cookers and tried out the solar cooker.



A quick look at the **advantages of the new technologies**
(double-click to watch the video)



Easter Sunday at *Kianjagi Church* in Chogoria

At the inauguration of a new priest.
we introduce our project.



Our first fieldwork day

Mugo (2nd f.r.) with the new *top promoters* Joyce (2nd f.l.), social worker, Micheni (r.), our expert on neem trees, on our way to Tharaka.



30-40 representatives of different groups have come

The newly elected local promoter receives liners for a fuel-saving clay stove. This is going to replace the open fireplace in the kitchen.



In **Kanyakine** near **Meru** we meet a group that has set up a **tree nursery** as one of their projects.



Today **Jane** from our **Gaketha** group has joined us as a promoter.



On Thursday we drive to Ishiara,
a town in a hot and dry area.



The assistant chief and the headmaster of the
local school receive a **Cookit**.



On our way back we get surprised by heavy tropical rain.

The last few kilometers home, Mugo, Micheni and I have to walk in the darkness. The car cannot make it uphill on the slippery dirt road.



Visit of a church project in Kibugua near Chuka

The project provides free coaching for children during the holidays.



A cheerful reception at the homestead of Mugo's sister

One man tells us that he has been making baskets for tea picking. He is quite excited about the basket cooker and wants to start producing it outright.



The official launch the *Gaketha Laura Energy Saving Group*

On the compound of Mugo's school, members of the group, people from the village and guests of honor have come together for a celebration.



On Monday we visit the ***Murugi Youth Polytechnic*** of the **Kibugua Church**

- (Unfortunately the batteries of my photo camera had to be recharged on that day.)
- The training centre of the polytechnic has been started six months earlier and is being supported by the church and through financial means from the government.
- Courses: Home economics, sewing, knitting, carpentry and metal work.
- The trainers are very interested in cooperating with us.
- We would also like to send women to the courses so they can exchange ideas with other women.
- The centre is situated in a central location (Chogoria) and can easily be reached by public means of transport. The rooms are also suitable for practical instructions in how to make solar and basket cookers and how to build fuel-saving clay stoves.
- We are planning to work together with the centre in the future.

A trip to the **tea factory** in **Weru** and a visit to the **boarding school** of Mugo's daughter.



The Muthambi Girls' High School

A modern school where teachers are open-minded towards new ideas



At Sun Transfer in Nairobi

Together with **Margaret Owino**, who heads the East Africa office of **Solar Cookers International**, we drive to the sales outlet of **Sun Transfer**, a non-profit foundation.

Mugo and Margaret promote the *Cookit* and the basket cooker. Margaret buys a hand- and ceiling lamp, Mugo a small photovoltaic home system with four energy-saving LED lights.

