Reviewer's report

Title: A Strategy to Increase Adoption of Locally-produced, Ceramic Cookstoves in Rural Kenyan Households

Version: 2 Date: 10 February 2012

Reviewer: Eva Rehfuess

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GENERAL COMMENT:

Overall, I found this paper much improved compared to the previous version. Removing the ETL component and clearly stating the objectives made the manuscript both leaner and easier to follow. In my view, most of the pieces are there (missing pieces are noted below) – although not necessarily in the right place. As a result, many of my broader comments relate to the structure of the paper, which should follow standard scientific practice.

MAJOR COMPULSORY REVISIONS:

Objectives:

1. The authors now clearly state four objectives, three of them as primary, one as secondary – a distinction that, in my view, is not necessary. I believe the manuscript clearly addresses objectives 1 (monitor adoption) and 4 (assess equity of adoption).

2. Objective 2 (document appropriateness of location) strikes me as overstated (i.e. location in the right households is really an issue of adoption/equity and therefore more closely associated with objective 4) and it is not clear where the objective of the correct location within the household comes from – are stove vendors taught where to install during the training or why do you assess this issue at the level of an objective? So my suggestion would be to split up objective 2 and assign the parts to objectives 1 and 4.

3. Objective 3 (assess perceived benefits) only relates to monetary and time saving benefits, right? If so, be clear; if not, please describe other issues assessed as well, even if the findings are negative. In terms of wanting to understand adoption, it would be really useful to understand why households that adopted value their stove (did you collect more information on that by any chance?) and why households that didn’t adopt decided not to.

Methods:

4. Structure:

Under different sections of the Methods section aspects relating to the description of the intervention are mixed with aspects relating to data collection, storage (e.g. data storage for sales under Cookstove adoption and integration) and analysis. I would therefore propose a major re-structure as follows –
although not necessarily with these headings:

- Project setting and overall study design (ethical approval belongs here and not with statistics)
- Intervention technology: cookstove and water treatment
- Intervention delivery: development of stove businesses and product integration
- Monitoring and evaluation (For each of the following data sources, you need a description of sampling, data collection (including timing/duration), data storage – most of the information given there is either thin or dispersed across the manuscript)
  - Baseline survey in 60 villages
  - Follow-up survey in 10 villages
  - Stove sales tracking
  - Data analysis

5. Project setting and design:

- In the Discussion you specifically mention the Luo – are all households in the project area Luo?
- The random selection of 60 villages belongs under overall project setting and study design but, surely, households that were not selected into the household survey, could also decide to purchase a cookstove, or not? If so, the description of the sample for the baseline survey really belongs under M&E (see above).

Results:

6. I would also propose a re-structure here, starting off with the results of baseline survey (i.e. much of the text currently under location and benefits), followed by headings that directly relate to each of your objectives.

Discussion

7. You do not locate your findings in the literature – relating to either WASH or IAP or other issues, which is a major drawback. What is new about this study, relative to other studies/project experiences?

8. There are some interesting aspects here that could be developed further, e.g. the issue of timing of incentives in relation to additional income – any references to other (maybe commercial) efforts that have utilized this approach?

MINOR ESSENTIAL REVISIONS:

9. Methods, Cookstove and water technologies: who produces WaterGuard, how does it reach the vendors (analogous to description for cookstoves)?

10. Methods, Cookstove adoption and integration:

- More details on the training for SMAP vendors would be helpful, e.g. if they are trained about diarrhoeal disease are they also trained about respiratory disease? Who trains them, for how long? The sentence “An upesi jiko was installed in more than 1 household each village …” is not clear.

- The description of the prospective follow-up of households and everything after
that belongs in the M&E section.

11. Results, Cookstove adoption and integration: Why do households adopt more than one upesi jiko?

12. Results, Location and benefits of cookstoves: You are not really asking about health benefits of the new stove but health concerns in relation to traditional cooking, so this does not fit here.

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I have no conflict of interest.