

# Report on Solar Cooking Training at Barli Development Institute for Rural Women May 2008

12 trainees of Barli development Institute for Rural women took a training course on how to use, maintain and assemble K14 parabolic solar cookers from 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> May 2008. These trainees will take a solar cooker home with them on the completion the training course and pay 1000 rupees out of the 6000 rupee cost price.

The remaining 5000 Rupees is being paid by PLAGÉ a charity based in Austria, This money is mostly raised by primary school children in Salzburg and other cities in Austria and by donations of privates and organisations like “Wiener Plattform Atomkraftfreie Zukunft”. Up to present a total of 143 solar cookers of this type have been donated by PLAGÉ, and are in use mostly in the rural and tribal region of Madhya Pradesh.

The training started by giving all the trainees material printed in their own language, simplified to be understood by those young women who had just become literate. They first had to study these materials to understand, 1. Why they should use solar cookers. 2. The benefits that they will have when they use solar cookers in their households, especially how it will affect their health, the health of the children and the community. 3. The impact that use of solar cookers will have on environment of their villages and surrounding areas. 4. That journeys they have to make to distant jungles to collect fuel wood will be greatly reduced, even come to an end with good management of their own resources.



After studying the documents and before starting to cook they were introduced to the solar cookers, first how to place them so that there will be full sunshine falling on the cooker during the time that it will take to cook the meals and to make sure it is sitting firmly on level ground, with a sufficient clear working area around the cooker. Then to make sure that it is focused properly so that all the available solar energy is being concentrated on the cooking pot, next they were informed of all the safety factors, to protect their eyes for the bright glare, to avoid burns by touching hot utensils, to ensure no spills from hot liquids and other hot food. They were also taught how to use the cooker efficiently without being exposed to standing continually in the bright sunshine.

First they learned how to cook their traditional dishes, how to change the recipe and the cooking methods of these dishes to suit cooking on solar cookers. As they still had to complete so other training at the institute solar cooking training was limited to four hours each day. After the first day of cooking the were taught how to clean the cooker and maintain it properly, how to clean in such a way as to maintain the shiny aluminum surface so it will last for many years.





Over the next four days they would cook different items and for these days all the 12 trainees would not get food from the institute kitchen, they would do all their cooking on the solar cookers. They would also learn the importance of using the solar cookers to provide some income, when the cooker is not in use for cooking the family meals.

By using the cookers to cook snacks and other packable cooked items like namkeens etc. these can be packed and sold and also kept in the home as snacks for the children and others.

Two days were taken up by training them how to assemble the K14 solar cooker. As we are now using the kits from Green Solutions in Gujarat, these kits do not have any instruction on how to build them as the kits from Germany did. Though there are some differences in the Green Solutions kit, e.g. some of the items that have to be formed in the German kit are pre formed in the Green Solution kit. To overcome this lack of instruction materials in the kit, we made color copies of the instruction that German kit supplied, each trainee was given one of these copies.



It may seem easy for most people teach someone to assemble these K14 kits, but it sometime can be quite difficult. Most of these young women have just become literate, now they are being taught to assemble solar cookers. For example, in Hindi for a nut and a bolt they say “Nutbolt” so up to 30 minutes of fun can be had teaching the trainees which part is named ‘nut’ and which part is named ‘bolt’.



To make sure they were confident that they could assemble the kits back in the village the cooker they built was taken apart by them and rebuilt a 2nd time there should be no mistakes made.



After this the kits were opened and a unique number stamped on each cooker. The kits were then handed over to 4 of the trainees; the others will receive the kits when they families bring the money for the cooker.



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