



Reusing Waste Charcoal as Biochar : Senegal

Providing urban and rural households with biochar made from clay and charcoal waste.

Project description

The initiative provides urban and rural households with biochar briquettes made from clay and charcoal waste, a cheap combustible fuel.

The initiative produces high-quality biochar using an innovative rotor press. The combustive properties of the biochar are close to those of charcoal but it is smokeless and odourless, thus reducing the negative health and environmental impact. The biochar is distributed via a network of sales outlets, mainly managed by women.



Business model

The initiative produces and markets biochar briquettes, selling them to retail dealers and women's associations who act as sales agents.

Biochar is two to three times cheaper than charcoal, saving users substantial amounts of money. These savings enable them to buy better stoves that reduce their energy consumption and thus make further savings. Part of the revenue from the project is reinvested in reforestation projects, helping to reduce greenhouse gases.

Scaling up activities in 2012

- Increase production capacity and reorganise the production site with the help of new funding; introduce new materials into the production process
- Maximise the marketing impact through advertising and promotional events; use a motor vehicle to improve local reach and potentially develop markets outside Saint-Louis
- Encourage the organisation of women's associations
- Support reforestation activities and other eco-friendly projects
- Strengthen and broaden partnerships

Immediate needs

- Supply: Funding to stock charcoal, clay and other biomass wastes to guarantee up to three months' production capacity
- Production: Purchase a motor-driven rotor press and mixing trays
- Distribution: Purchase a motor vehicle and several lights trolleys to increase market reach; funding for advertising, promotional events and the training of women's associations





SEED Awards 2011

for entrepreneurship in sustainable development

WINNER

Partnership

- **PERACOD** Program for the Promotion of Renewable Energies, Rural Electrification and Sustainable Supply in Domestic Fuel) provides technical, financial and training support
- **UNCEFS** National Union of Forestry Merchants of Senegal) enables exchange with forest management specialists and helps to organise the collection process
- **CFF** Coopérative Forestière du Fleuve) acts as intermediary in the collection process
- **IREFS** Inspection Régionale des Eaux et Forêt de Saint-Louis) provides
- **Bioterre** is a commercial partner
- **CMS** Crédit Mutuel du Sénégal) provides financial support, including microfinancing for women associations



Social, environmental and economic impacts

Social impact: The initiative helps to protect women's health, as biochar is both smokeless and odourless. Users also save money on fuel, allowing them to meet their own needs and those of their families and thus improving their living conditions.

Environmental impact: The initiative reduces deforestation by providing an alternative to collecting firewood. Part of the profit is actively reinvested in reforestation. The initiative also raises environmental awareness in the community.

Economic impact: The initiative creates new jobs for young people and women in the area of production and sales, generating income for them. Users save money by using the biochar. In addition, profits earned on the sale of biochar enable the initiative to make further investments and open up new sources of income for its beneficiaries.

Contact

Nthié DIARRA

Email: bradesenegal@yahoo.fr, Tel: 00221776412149

SEED Partners

SEED's founding partners are the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) and SEED is hosted by UNEP-WCMC. Other current partners are the governments of Germany, India, the Netherlands, South Africa, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States of America; the European Union; Conservation International; and SEED's corporate partner, Hisense.

About the SEED Initiative

The SEED Initiative identifies and supports promising small scale social and environmental entrepreneurs around the globe, entrepreneurs that while working towards a greener economy also tackle poverty, marginalisation and social exclusion.

SEED provides these social entrepreneurs with know how and networks, taking the lessons learnt at local level up to decision-makers to promote evidence-based policy making.

More information: www.seedinit.org

SEED Secretariat

info@seedinit.org

