

IIT-I students embark on making village free of indoor pollution

Students of the students are helping households of Nayagaon village in replacing their traditional chulha with a modern one



Guided by IIT Indore students, women making low-smoke stove at Nayagaon village.

● OUR STAFF REPORTER INDORE

Taking a leaf out of IIT-Delhi's book, students of Indian Institute of Technology, Indore have taken up the task of making a village near their campus in Simrol free from indoor air pollution.

As part of their Enactus initiative, students of IIT-Indore are helping the households of Nayagaon village in replacing their traditional chulha with a modern chulha which will produce lesser smoke and reduce indoor air pollution.

As per a study, nearly 140 million households in rural India cook their meals on traditional chulhas which are lit using solid fuels like wood, cow dung, charcoal or agricultural waste.

The smoke that emits from these traditional cooking stoves deteriorates the quality of air and affects the health of people, especially women, who spend a substantial amount of time cooking on it.

According to a study conducted by the Lancet Respiratory Medicine Commission, London, "Around 10 lakh people die across In-

dia every year due to pollution caused from burning solid fuels."

Moved by these stunning facts, members of IIT-Delhi Enactus launched a project called Aanch in the Bhatti mines in Delhi's Chat-tarpur area. They designed a low-smoke stove and employed women of Bhatti mines in the process of manufacturing it.

This stove also produces heat through burning of wood and cow dung but it emits lesser amount of smoke in comparison to a traditional chulha. Attached with a chimney to direct smoke out of the house, the stove uses about one-third of wood that a chulha consumes.

The manufacturing cost of the stove is Rs 450 and its selling price is Rs 650. The profit made on each stove goes to the women manufacturing it.

"Observing the need for this kind of stove in Nayagaon, we collaborated with Enactus Team in IIT-Delhi to get the mould, training and to make them free from indoor air pollution. We started project Aanch on January 16 in Nayagaon where we got a good response for our product,"

students of IIT-Indore said in a press release.

One more benefit of the project Aanch is that it helps women in becoming self-sustainable through the selling of these stoves.

"Women in Nayagaon have learnt the entire making and are ready to start their own business to make their village free from harmful smoke," students of IIT Indore said.

In September 2015, Enactus IIT-Indore had applied for KPMG Business Ethics Grant 2015 that has helped it monetarily in this project. Several other institutes/colleges had applied for this grant and Enactus IIT Indore is amongst the winners of Rs 50,000 grant.

Started in 2014, Enactus IIT-Indore aims to make society a better place to live in, especially rural India. Enactus, which helps in achieving the United Nation's 17 sustainable development goals, works with leaders in business and higher education to mobilize university students to make a difference in their communities while developing their skills to become socially responsible business leaders.