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Effectiveness of improved cookstoves in promoting sustainable food consumption: A case study of a rural community in Meghalaya, India

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Abstract

Unsustainable food consumption practices have contributed to environmental degradation and exacerbated climate change, particularly in vulnerable communities. This case study examines the effectiveness of a carbon offset project by Infosys, which supplied approximately 10,000 improved cookstoves to families in rural Meghalaya, India. The project aimed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, promote sustainable consumption and production, and improve the quality of life of the rural community. The project positively impacts 11 of the 17 SDG goals.

Through this study, we explore the impact of improved cookstoves on sustainable food consumption, with a focus on the reduction of firewood usage and associated deforestation. Additionally, we examine the effect of the project on poverty reduction, health, and women's empowerment. Our methodology includes both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods, including surveys and interviews with project participants.

Preliminary findings indicate that the project has had a positive impact on sustainable food consumption and the community's overall well-being. Improved cookstoves have reduced the use of firewood and associated deforestation, as well as improved indoor air quality, reducing health risks associated with traditional cooking methods. Additionally, the time saved in cooking and wood collection has allowed for more income-generating activities and household tasks.

Our study highlights best practices and lessons learned from the project and identifies potential areas for further research and innovation in promoting sustainable consumption and production. By contributing to the body of knowledge on sustainable food systems, this study can inform future projects aiming to improve the well-being of rural communities and reduce the environmental impact of food consumption practices.

Keywords: Livelihood improvement, reduce GHG emissions, sustainable consumption and production

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