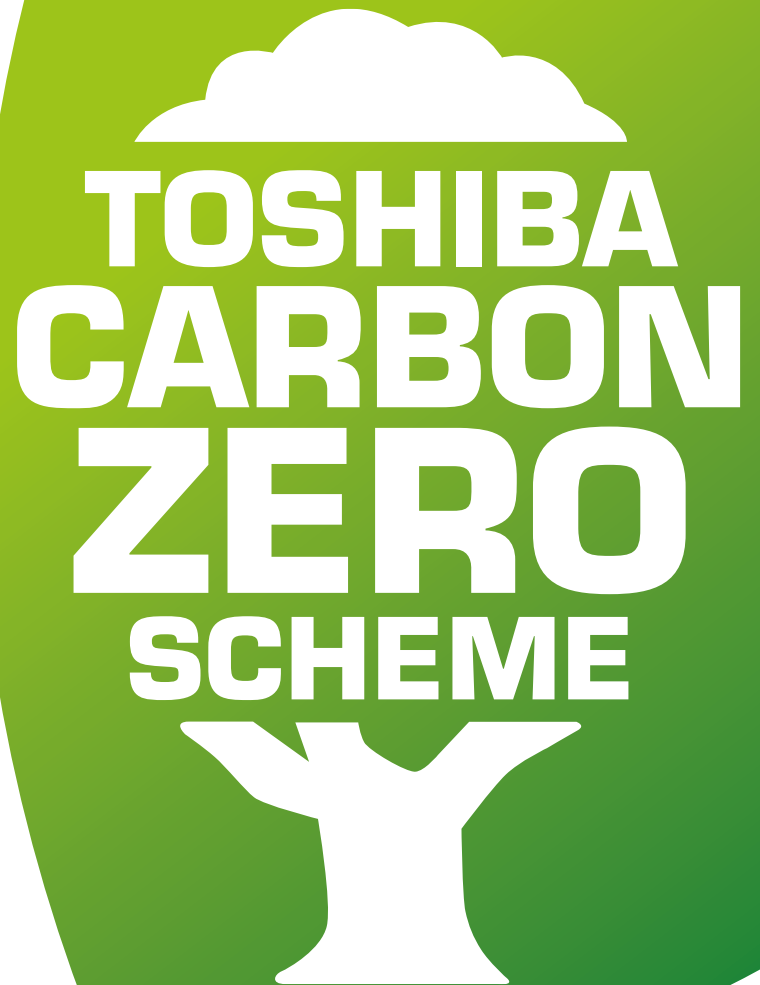


CASE STUDY

Efficient Energy Stove
Project in Kenya

> Basket Weavers



BASKET WEAVERS

The Shimba Hills district of Kenya covers an area of 250 km² and lies approximately 40 km south-west of Mombasa. This ecosystem is of global significance as it recently been designated one of the top 25 biodiversity hotspots requiring global attention. The area is surrounded by poor farming communities whose lifestyles often impact negatively on the ecosystem, especially due to harvesting of trees for firewood.

The energy efficient stove project in this area has had an unexpected beneficial effect on the local community. One of the most powerful benefits resulting from our stove projects is the amount of time saved by women through the use of the new stoves. For most women in rural Kenya, a typical day involves waking up at sunrise and walking to the nearest forested area to collect their firewood for the day. Often, women might have to walk for 2 to 3 hours to do this. Once home, they immediately begin preparing food for their families. On a traditional open fire stove, where the heat is not centralised and directed under the pot, cooking times for different meals can vary. A woman can spend anything from 15 minutes to an hour cooking her food.



Mercy Mghambi Mwazighe & Florence Awuda
Members of the Rukanga Basket Weavers Group



The co2balance improved cook stoves drastically reduce the amount of firewood used when cooking, we also see a corresponding reduction in time spent collecting firewood. The new stove design is also highly efficient with the heat directly under the pot, as a result heat is not lost and women see a reduction in cooking time as well. Some women can now have over an hour a day to themselves to get involved in other activities that can be of benefit to them.

We travelled to Rukanga, a remote village in the region, to meet with some women who are maximising the time saved with the new stove, and using this new found time that they have, to get involved in income generating activities that benefit their entire families. We were welcomed into Rukanga by Florence Awuda and Mercy Mghambi Mwazighe. These women are both recipients of the improved cook stove. We spoke to Mercy and Florence about how they are spending the time they have saved as a result of the CarbonZero stove.

Mercy: “ I am a member of the Rukanga Basket Weavers Group. I work with Florence and many women to weave beautiful baskets from Sisal. These baskets we can sell and make money. Now we have more time, we can make more baskets. If we make more baskets we can make more money not only for us but also for our family.”

Florence: “Yes, Mercy is correct. You know I was spending a lot of time collecting firewood so I could only work on my baskets at night after I had prepared food and looked after the chores and family. Now I have time to even work on my baskets at the day time because I am not collecting, collecting all the time. And also to add to this it is very good because I have had time to learn new basket weaving techniques also. Now I can also make bottle holders and table cloths. I have more time to learn. This is good too.”

Mercy and Florence were not the only ones impressed with the time saving benefit of the new stove. We also spoke to Rosemary Awour and Abena Mbasha who both run small shops in Rukanga. This is what they had to say:

Rosemary: “ I have been telling everyone that comes here to Rukanga for the last year how good this project is. I have a small dukka (shop) that I in the past would have to close while I was out collecting firewood. If I did not close it I would have to leave my two little boys to look after it while I was out and they did not like this. Infact they fight with me because they do not like it. Now I do not collect every day. I only collect 3 times in a week. For the other days I can be in my dukka and selling things. It is good for business to keep the shop open.”

Abena: “You are from Carbonzero? This is a very good company. They have brought many jiko (stove) to our community. Its good, it’s a very nice looking stove. And also it cooks very fast. So very fast I can just cook some cabbage even 15 minutes before my husband returns and it is ready. I do not spend time preparing firewood, and lighting a fire and waiting for suffuria (pot) to get hot. Its quick quick. So I stay in my shop all day and only go home when it is almost time for my husband to return. It is good. More time with my shop more money for more things.”

From these interviews it is clear that the women we work with are all motivated and determined individuals who want to cultivate change within their own lives. By simply giving them time to do so, and freeing them from the responsibility of firewood collection daily, they are able to take the initiative and get involved in opportunities to improve their standard of living, with both social and economic payback.



Rosemary Awour
Shop owner from Rukanga

“With positive printing you help the environment and improve the lives of the people involved.”

About CO2 balance

Established in 2003, CO2balance UK Ltd is a leading, UK based, carbon management provider offering carbon calculation, management and reduction services to leading blue chip companies including, BSKyB, Toshiba and Gaz De France. As a project developer co2balance UK Ltd creates African Gold Standard and CDM projects that focus on social, health and community benefits to the families within the project area, in addition to carbon savings.



To find out more about CO2balance, the CarbonZero stove projects and other carbon management products and services please visit www.co2balance.com

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For more information please contact us:

Toshiba Tec Germany Imaging Systems GmbH

Carl-Schurz-Str. 7
41460 Neuss
Germany

Telephone

+49 2131-1245-0

Website

www.toshibatec.eu



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