

### WOOD SMOKE AND OUR HEALTH

Is your energy source damaging your health? Burning fuels inside the house generates smoke. The smoke enters your respiratory system - your airways - which carry air to your lungs to keep you alive. These airways are lined with sensitive skin, which can be irritated by the smoke. Eyes too become painful and inflamed. Two million people are killed by smoke and soot each year in the world. Acute respiratory infections are very common (coughing, wheezing, phlegm, asthma are all symptoms). Apart from cooking outside and keeping children away from the smoke, what can be done?

#### Small changes make big improvements

The type of stove you use needs to suit you and your family, but its design can affect your health, wealth and happiness too! An efficient stove uses less fuel to cook the same amount of food, reducing smoke. To be efficient, a stove needs to suit the way fire works! Fire needs air, circulating under and up and through. A grate and a door on the stove help air enter. Walls around your stove contain and shield the fire directing more heat into the cooking pot. In Western Kenya, the Upesi stove is built by local potters. Ten thousand are now sold every year. The Upesi stove halves the amount of fuelwood needed to cook, plus you can also cook with straw and other waste from agriculture.

*There are plenty of other tips to save fuel and make your kitchen more comfortable!*

**i** ACTION SHEETS - 57: REDUCING KITCHEN SMOKE, 58: FUEL SAVERS, 62: IMPROVED STOVES

## FUEL SAVERS

- Reduce the amount of fuel you need by **two thirds!!!** Put a lid on your cooking pot!
- Use a pressure cooker - a special pot which cooks food much faster than a normal pot
- Soak lentils and grains and chop vegetables small to reduce cooking time

