

Something's Cookin': Smokeless stoves

The current method of cooking food in Pakistani villages is currently toilsome. Burning wood results in people struggling with masses of smoke filling their homes. It is an unhygienic way of cooking that a vast majority of rural and marginalized women have been forced to use for decades.

As Heritage Foundation proceeds to find ways to provide ever increasing Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)-compliant design options, an improved cooking arrangement is among the most important requirements for the benefit of women in post disaster communities.

A smokeless stove (*chulah*) was constructed in January 2013 at Karavan EcoVillage Mohak Sharif. The design is based on the one built in the base camp in Mansera with assistance from Mr. Saad Khan, VP, Swiss Pakistan Society.

The mud brick structure was built expeditiously, so that within a day the *chulah* had become functional. This demonstrated the ease with which such enterprise can be executed with local construction materials and techniques.

The *chulah*, consisting of two fires, utilizes fuel economically. Although only one fire is lit, the heat from it is transferred to the second, thus making it possible to cook two items side by side.

The Heritage Foundation is also conducting a study to assess the reduction in the use of fuel as a comparative between the present *chulahs* and the Karavan smokeless *chulah*.

The *chulah* has been designed as a DRR compliant structure and consists of a platform which provides not only cooking arrangement but also provides elevated space to store water and other utensils etc. The raising of the *chulah* from the floor helps in keeping the cooking process clean and free of any dust and insects, thus providing a hygienic cooking arrangement.

To augment the benefits of the stoves, a Karavan Mihrab Kitchen is being designed to incorporate DRR compliant, hygienic cooking to provide it protection during floods and rains.