



LOCATION:

Cambodia, Southeast Asia

ENTREPRENEUR:

SME Renewable Energy

ENERGY:

Biomass

Turning agricultural waste into energy in Cambodia reduces diesel fuel usage by 65%.

After years of civil war, unrest and corruption, Cambodia suffers from an almost total lack of basic infrastructure and a nominal rural electrification rate. Most of Cambodia's rural electricity is generated by diesel fuel and delivered to customers in poor quality and at a high price. The lack of modern energy is a major impediment to regional and rural economic development as small and medium enterprises, such as rice mills and brick manufacturers, are weighed down by huge energy costs of up to 48% of their total operating budget.

SME Renewable Energy (SME-RE), a biomass energy project developer, helps Cambodian enterprises access modern clean energy services. To decrease energy costs, increase economic growth opportunities, and promote local environmental improvements, SME-RE sells biomass gasifier systems to industries operating in rural Cambodia where there are more than 1,000 rural energy enterprises delivering poor quality electricity to rural customers at nearly 95 cents per kilowatt hour, one of the most expensive in southern Asia.

SME-RE works with both the rural energy enterprises and local rice mills to provide more affordable and cleaner energy. Because one rice mill alone can generate more than 3,000 tons of rice husks per year, this is an affordable and available alternative source of energy. By taking the rice husks from the rice mills and upgrading the rural energy enterprises' diesel systems to biomass gasification systems, diesel fuel consumption can be reduced by 70%.

IMPACT:

- A savings for the mill of more than US\$40,000 in annual operating costs.
- Reduced diesel fuel usage by 65%.
- Reduced carbon dioxide emission by 100-200 tons per year.

We have provided funds for the financing of rice husk gasifiers for six companies associated with SME-RE in rural Cambodia. We continue to work with SME-RE to put in place a financing plan for expanding the market for gasification systems.

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