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Thesis title: “Healthy Stoves” in Nepal. The adoption of improved cookstoves in the districts of Kavrepalanchok and Dolakha

Key words: Household air pollution, improved cookstoves, adoption

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Abstract:

Problem statement: Improved cookstoves (ICS) are regarded as a good method of preventing exposure to household air pollution (HAP). In Nepal, an ambitious programme was recently launched with the goal of providing “clean cooking solutions for all by 2017”. A local NGO involved in this mission is ‘Swastha Chulo Nepal’ (SCN). Their focus is in the first instance on ICS supply, and sound data about stove use are lacking. But ICS will not have an impact if they are not used properly and on a long-term basis.

Objectives: To describe how ICS are perceived and used, and to identify barriers for adoption

Methods: Interviews and observations on stove use were conducted at three study sites, representing different periods of ICS construction (recently, more than 1 year ago, and more than 2 years ago).

Findings: There is a discrepancy between reported and observed stove use. Adoption is not as aimed, particularly in connection with substituting ICS for traditional stoves. In point of fact, most of the participants now use both stoves. A number of factors, (a) seasonal, (b) socio-cultural, (c) practical, have been identified as hindering people from using the ICS exclusively.

Discussion: While this study draws a complex picture of ICS adoption, it is unable to provide objective data on stove use and HAP exposure over time.

Conclusion: To assess the impacts of current stove programmes a more objective and less time-consuming monitoring system would be necessary. Such monitoring tools have been available for some years now. In the absence of reliable data on stove use, I suggest considering HAP an ongoing issue.