



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**For immediate release**

1 June 2009

**Attn: Features/Environment Editor, News Editor**

Contact: Ilana Cravitz, Ashden Awards Press Officer: T +44 (0) 20 8985 3724 or mobile: +44 (0) 782 551 0881; E [ilana.cravitz@ashdenawards.org](mailto:ilana.cravitz@ashdenawards.org)

## **Global green energy awards 2009 – international finalists announced**

**Today, the world's leading green energy Awards scheme announced that sustainable energy pioneers from the UK, US/China, Africa, Asia and Latin America have been chosen as finalists for the Ashden Awards for Sustainable Energy 2009. In total, the projects stand to be awarded more than £350,000, to be used for scheme improvement and expansion. The winners will be announced at a ceremony hosted by HRH The Prince of Wales in London on 11 June.**

There are six international finalists:

**Ethiopia:** the **Solar Energy Foundation (SEF)** has set up the biggest solar energy programme in Ethiopia, with over 2,000 small solar systems installed in two villages that are off the electricity grid and a further 8,500 units due to be installed elsewhere in the country by the end of the year. The solar-home-systems are bringing electricity to these communities for the first time. The Foundation was established in 2006 by Dr Harald Schützeichel, a German energy pioneer.

**India:** French charity **Groupe Energies Renouvelable Environnement et Solidarités (GERES)**, working **in the Himalayan region of Ladakh**, is improving the nutrition of villagers and boosting their income, working with local organisations to help them grow fresh vegetables year-round in simple passive solar greenhouses. The specially-designed robust greenhouses capture the sun's heat and allow people to grow nutritious produce including spinach, coriander, onions, garlic and strawberries throughout the year.

**India: Saran Renewable Energy Pvt. Ltd in Bihar, in eastern India**, has installed a new gasification system that generates electric power for eleven hours per day using locally-sourced biomass, providing a popular, sustainable, and cheap alternative to an unreliable grid supply. The 220 MWh of electricity produced in a year is currently sold to ten businesses which previously used diesel generators, as well as farmers, a school and a clinic. The result is a better-quality and more reliable electricity supply that prevents the emission of about 200 tonnes/year CO<sub>2</sub> from the 77,000 tonnes of diesel that would otherwise be used, and helps to secure income for the 100 local farmers who supply biomass.

**Nicaragua: Empresa de Comunicaciones, SA (ECAMI)** is a family business founded by Luis Lacayo Cortes in 1982 to sell and install radio-communications systems in remote areas. Solar photovoltaics (PV) were the ideal way to power these systems, and the business diversified into providing high-quality PV equipment for other applications, and also different renewable technologies. Although ECAMI operates on a commercial basis, it has a strong commitment to improving the lives of the rural poor and works with NGOs and community organisations providing small loans and grants to make the technologies more affordable. Their work is welcomed in Nicaragua, where 31% of the population is without mains electricity; in many rural areas there are no grid supplies at all.

**Uganda: Kampala Jellitone Suppliers Ltd**, a business based in the outskirts of Kampala, is the first successful company in Uganda to produce non-char biomass briquettes made directly from agricultural waste, and business is booming. KJS is a coffee processing business that recognised the potential for converting its 'waste' into a clean fuel. Market demand was so strong that they started producing and selling briquettes made from the residues along with improved stoves that burn the briquettes more cleanly and efficiently. The company is currently selling about 130 tonnes of briquettes every month to 31 schools, universities and hospitals for cooking, and to five factories for producing heat.

**USA/China: Aprovecho Research Center (ARC)**, based in Oregon USA, has pioneered the design of efficient stoves since the 1970s, and provided consultancy to many stove programmes. To develop a portable, cheap and efficient fuel-wood stove for high volume production, in 2006 they partnered with **Shengzhou Stove Manufacturer (SSM)**, the largest manufacturer of domestic coal stoves in China. The stoves are now manufactured in the SSM factory in China and sold globally to stove distributors. 60,000 stoves have been sold since 2008, over 90% to Envirofit International, a US-based non-profit which markets the stoves in India supported by the Shell Foundation, and SSM's production capacity is now 50,000 stoves per month.

**ENDS**

**For further information on the 2009 Ashden Awards international finalists (including case studies) and to schedule interviews, contact Ilana Cravitz, International Press Officer:**

**T + 44 (0) 20 8985 3724; M + 44 (0) 782 551 0881; E [ilana.cravitz@ashdenawards.org](mailto:ilana.cravitz@ashdenawards.org)**

Photos online: <http://www.ashdenawards.org/photos>. Film footage of projects on request.

### **Notes to editors**

1. The Ashden Awards for Sustainable Energy were founded in 2001 to encourage the greater use of local sustainable energy to address climate change and alleviate poverty. Since then they have rewarded nearly one hundred winners across the UK and the developing world. The Ashden Awards work to show-case and celebrate best practice, encourage the expansion and replication of winners' work, raise awareness of the potential of local sustainable energy, and advocate on their winners' behalf. For further information, including photos, films, and case studies on past winners, go to [www.ashdenawards.org](http://www.ashdenawards.org). The Ashden Awards Patron is HRH The Prince of Wales.

2. The Ashden Awards ceremony will be held on Thursday 11 June in central London. To report/film from the event contact Ilana Cravitz (details as above). **For security reasons, journalists must register in advance and bring photo ID.**

3. International finalists are available for interview. They will be in London 8-12 June. There will be presentations and films about their work at the Ashden Awards Imperial College Conference on Wednesday 10 June. For further details, to set up interviews, or to attend contact Ilana Cravitz (details as above). The Conference will be streamed live on the Imperial College website.

4. An Outstanding Achievement Award will be made on 11 June to a previous Ashden Award winner from India. Ashden Awards will also be made to UK contenders in four categories: schools, businesses, local authorities and charities. For more details see [www.ashdenawards.org](http://www.ashdenawards.org).