

Developing a 4Ps Marketing Mix to Introduce the *Adhunik (Modern) Chula* in Bangladesh



The High Price of Cooking

Cooking has become one of the most dangerous daily activities for women in the developing world. Exposure to smoke from inefficient traditional cookstoves and open cooking fires kills 4 million people annually and causes cancer, pneumonia, heart and lung disease, and blindness; traditional cooking can also lead to scalds, burns and injuries from hauling heavy bundles of wood. Women and girls may risk physical and sexual assault when collecting fuel. Even when fuel is freely available, women using traditional methods pay too high a price for cooking.

The Benefits of an Improved Stove

Improved cookstoves can save fuel and reduce smoke. Time savings from reduced fuel collection can free up women and girls to focus on income generation, and both time and cost savings (for those who purchase wood) can be spent on schooling, recreation, and other productive opportunities.

However, many cookstoves are designed without input from end users, but rather developed as an “ideal” product from a health or energy point of view. Consequently, the stoves are not appealing to consumers, who end up using them inconsistently or not at all, negating all potential benefits.

In Bangladesh, WASHplus teamed up with the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves, CCEB, and other key stakeholders to facilitate opening the market to new improved cookstoves by conducting and applying a suite of consumer research and strategic marketing assessments.

The 4Ps of Marketing

To introduce and sell a new idea or product, marketers develop a strategic marketing mix, classically comprised of 4 variables:

- **Product (or Service)** – What attributes does each consumer segment value? Are particular stove types (or brands) more appealing/ appropriate for one segment?
- **Place** – What are the most accessible and appealing distribution points for the product? Who are the sales agents? What should the supply chain look like? Is there a sales and customer service team in place?
- **Price** – How much can the segment pay for the product? Can installments or financing make the product more appealing and accessible? Does perception of value fluctuate with pricing?
- **Promotion** – What benefits are most appealing to this segment? Who/what is the most influential channel to reach them? How will brand awareness be raised? How will products’ promotion differ from that of competition?



Defining and Shaping the ICS Product to Meet Consumer Needs and Wants

In Bangladesh, the WASHplus project conducted a Consumer Preference and Willingness to Pay Study of five types of new stoves, to identify the needs and wants of Bangladeshi cooks and families. Consumers gave feedback after using the stoves in their homes for 3 weeks; this was shared with manufacturers, some of whom opted to modify their stoves accordingly, to make the product more appealing to consumers.



EcoChula



Stoves tested by consumers



Prakti

For example, Alpha Renewable Energy modified their EcoChula to be slightly larger, and incorporate a top skirt and a heavy duty stand in response to consumer complaints about instability. Prakti modified their LeoChimney by adding more space around the burners to better accommodate typical Bangladesh pots, increasing the size of the fuel door, and improving the ash collection design.

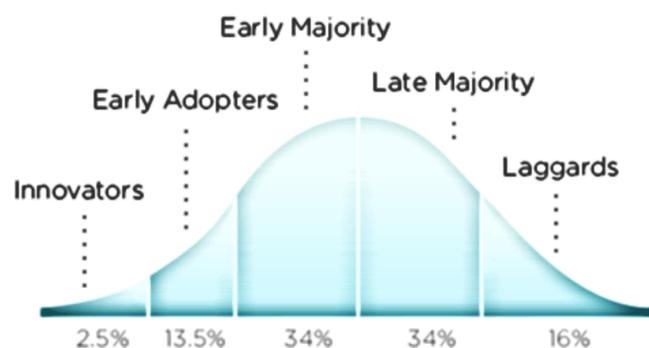
Differentiating the Product from the Traditional Stove and the *Bondhu Chula*

The consumer research explored how best to position the “next generation” of ICS in relation to both the local *Bondhu Chula* ICS, and the traditional stoves. Because these new ICS carry different product attributes and pricing than the *Bondhu Chula*, research concluded the need for a distinguishing name to reflect a unique image and appeal of the product. After testing several options, consumers chose the *Adhunik (Modern) Chula* to refer to this general category of ICS. Individual stoves will be marketed by their brand name.

Further defining the Product “P”

Consumer research suggests further distinguishing the ICS by differentiating two distinct ICS product categories – *Value & Premium* – to increase targeting of the ICS products to the various early adopter segments.

First Market to the Early Adopters



For “next generation” improved cookstoves, stakeholders in Bangladesh conducted consumer research to identify **EARLY ADOPTER SEGMENTS, groupings of consumers most likely to try and buy the new ICS**, and then developed a 4Ps Marketing Mix for each of these early adopter segments. Targeting early adopters is a technique to first reach those most open to new products such as the ICS, with ability to pay or finance the product. Adopter segments are often “staged” to build momentum, popularity and sales of the product over time.

Early Adopter Segments for ICS

1: Urban/peri-urban middle class

Interested in exploring new technologies and products that will help them stay a step ahead of others by making their life more comfortable, convenient and increase their social status/image. Offering: Premium product, bundled with an aspirational rice cooker with messages around flexibility.

2: Urban/peri-urban lower middle class

Responsive to what the middle class does, this second group of “early adopters” see a Modern Value *Chula* as a more efficient and cost-effective product that cooks better tasting food than a kerosene stove. Bundled with other “modern kitchen products” such as a water filter, they now see the modern kitchen “within reach” through optional financing or installment payments.

3: Urban/peri-urban poor

Our third segment sees the middle and particularly the lower middle class “advancing” and benefitting from the modern kitchen. The Modern Value *Chula* bundled with other “modern” kitchen components to be determined, with optional financing. Perhaps a new pot is included as a “guarantee of quality,” to monitor stove effectiveness (no black pot!) and indicate when servicing is needed.

4: Rural lower middle class /middle class - Want to make life easier and save money for other priorities like children’s schooling and health urgencies. Need to make fuel savings “visible” to make purchase “practical,” financing or installments help make it possible. Middle class aims for premium *chula* for status and product benefits; lower middle most receptive to modern value *chula* to reach aspirations. Focus marketing just before and during rainy season.

For all segments, target those who purchase and burn wood fuel.

WASHplus is a five-year cooperative agreement funded through USAID’s Bureau for Global Health, led by FHI 360 with Winrock International and CARE as core partners; WASHplus supports healthy households and communities by creating and supporting interventions that lead to improvements related to water supply, sanitation, and hygiene and household air pollution. www.washplus.org. For more information, contact WASHplus Deputy Director, Julia Rosenbaum, jrosenbaum@fhi360.org.

The Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves is a public-private partnership hosted by the UN Foundation to save lives, improve livelihoods, empower women, and protect the environment by creating a thriving global market for clean and efficient household cooking solutions. The Alliance’s activities in Bangladesh are guided by a Country Action Plan (CAP) that was developed through locally-led consultations with national stakeholders and adopted in November 2013, which makes the case for taking immediate action towards achieving the goal of 100% clean cooking solutions by 2030 through priority interventions on the demand, the supply and the enabling environment pillars of the cookstove and fuel sector.

International Development Enterprises (iDE), known for Human Centered Design and innovative marketing strategies for development products, researched and developed the “4Ps Marketing and Behavior Change Strategy for ICS in Bangladesh” under contract.