

Minutes of Awareness meeting on Resource Efficiency brick production (held in Chennai on 19th August 2010)

An awareness meeting on resource efficient brick (REB) production was organized by the Tamil Nadu Brick and Tile Manufacturers' Federation and TERI at Chennai on August 19, 2010. Thiruvallur is an important brick cluster in Chennai which caters to the markets in Chennai region. The majority of units comprise Bull's Trench Kilns (BTKs) with an average production capacity of 25,000 to 30,000 bricks per day.

About 12 brick kiln entrepreneurs participated in the meeting, including one entrepreneur who has recently started producing solid bricks with machinery acquired from China. One technology supplier (Mr Periyasamy from Malli Bricks), who provides technical services in design and commissioning of fixed chimneys and pug mills, also participated in the meeting. TERI provided a background of the UNDP–GEF project and overview of technological options that are available to the brick industry for upgrading their production processes. Typically, all brick industries in Chennai follow manual brick production process and use imported coal (low ash) from Indonesia for firing bricks. Mr Periyasamy stressed the importance of soil preparation or pugging before it is moulded. Better preparation of soil is of paramount importance as it helps in improving the quality of moulded bricks.

The presentations were followed by open discussions among the participants, which are summarized below:

- The brick kiln entrepreneurs in Chennai have realized the importance of technology upgradation with the entry, into the Chennai market, of brick products manufactured by Wienerberger, Bangalore.
- Availability of labour has generally been an important issue, and the entrepreneurs are looking for suitable options to manual moulding practices
- Large investments are required for adopting machinery in brick making; this could be a major issues as it would influence the overall production cost of bricks and the competitiveness of a semi-mechanized/mechanized unit vis-à-vis other brick kiln entrepreneurs in the local market.
- One of the brick kiln entrepreneurs has started using machinery from China for brick moulding. The unit experiences some teething problems in terms of development of cracks in bricks, but feels that these problems can be dealt with through suitable improvements in operating practices.

The participants at the meeting were of the opinion that an exposure visit to brick kiln units that have adopted machinery would help them decide on whether or not to adopt mechanized REB production.

Agenda for the **Awareness meeting on Resource Efficiency brick production**

Place : Chennai

Date : August 19, 2010

10:00 – 10:15 AM	Welcome address – Tamil Nadu Brick and Tile Manufacturers' Federation
10:15 – 11:00 AM	Overview of UNDP GEF project and technology options for REB production– Vasudevan N, TERI
11:00 – 11:45 AM	Soil preparation and pug mills – Periyasamy, Malli bricks, Chennai
11:45 – 12:30 Noon	Open discussions

List of participants

S No	Name of entrepreneur	Name of brick kiln
1	G Gajendiran	Vinodh Brick Works
2	D Neelakandaan	Sridevi Brick Field
3	R Perumal	Sri Kalki Brick Industry
4	D varadarajulu	Sri Radha Krishna Brick Field
5	P Deena Dayalu	K S R Brick Industry
6	B Balasubramainiam	B C Brick Industry
7	P V Baskara Babu	Geetanjali Brick Industry
8	Jaya Kumar	Prasanti brick Industry
9	S Krishna Kumar	K R D Brick Industry
10	M Sridharan	Sri Rukmani Krishna Brick Field
11	D Nagarajan	Rama Krishna Brick Yard
12	K Vasu	Sri Bhavani Brick Industry
13	Periyasamy	Supplier of pug mill and fixed chimney