What is Fresh Air?
Can illustration projects have impact and make a difference to environmental issues?

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image: Angus Ulyett, from the 'Smoke Monster' Animation, 2019.

In low and middle-income countries, chronic lung diseases (CLDs) are increasing fast due to air pollution in homes related to fires for cooking and heating, outdoor air pollution, tobacco smoking and serious lung infections like tuberculosis. Health care services are poorly adapted to deal with such diseases and they cannot afford normal medicines used in Europe. People with lung disease tend to avoid exercise, become unfit and demotivated, leading to a cycle of decline. They become socially isolated, partly because other people think they may catch the disease from them and partly because they are unable to contribute to the family or society. In very poor countries this often means they have no money, or food and become malnourished and progressively sicker.

Working collaboratively with Professor Rupert Jones and the FRESH AIR project illustration students have been tasked with the objective of this research is co-developing illustrated educational materials on the risks of using biomass fuels which could be used in Africa. The first stage of the project was initially aimed at midwives as part of educating women in antenatal and postnatal clinics. Materials developed during the project have now been adopted by the World Health Organisation for essential training in Africa related to Lung Disease.