



The Problem

More than three billion people rely on fuels like wood, charcoal, coal, and kerosene to cook their food every day. Cooking this way leads to dangerous levels of smoke exposure, killing up to four million people annually, with women and children being particularly vulnerable. Lack of access to clean cooking solutions has significant consequences for women and girls. Not only does cooking endanger their health from inhaling toxic smoke, but they may be removed from school because of domestic work like firewood collection and walk ever-greater distances carrying heavy loads due to forest degradation. In conflict settings, women face an increased vulnerability to physical attack when leaving their communities or refugee camps in search of fuel. Yet women are not just victims: because of their central role in managing household energy, they are critical in the widespread adoption and use of clean cooking solutions.

The Solution

Providing women access to modern energy is a critical but often overlooked means of empowering women at a household level and advancing gender equality. With clean cooking technologies, a woman could reduce or eliminate her exposure to household air pollution; cut down on cooking time; eliminate or reduce the number of trips she makes to fetch firewood; and be able to leverage the time saved to engage in productive economic activities, pursue educational opportunities, or simply rest.

Women play a critical role in increasing awareness and generating demand for clean cooking solutions, partly as a result of their networks and community relationships. The clean cooking value chain also offers new pathways for women's economic empowerment, providing opportunities for women entrepreneurs to contribute to a thriving global industry for clean cooking.

Gender Aspects of Cooking

- **Up to 10 hours each week** is the amount of time that women and children in developing countries can spend gathering fuels.
- **42% of households reported incidents of gender-based violence** during firewood collection in Chad over a six-month period.
- **Women entrepreneurs sold 3x more stoves** than their male counterparts following an empowerment training for women and men.

How Has the Alliance Supported Gender Aspects of Clean Cooking?

- **1,000+ women entrepreneurs supported** through grants and capacity building
- **25+ case studies** on gender best practices
- **30+ enterprises supported** to integrate gender
- **2,200 girls and boys serving as agents of change** in their communities by promoting clean cooking solutions

Priorities for Action

The Alliance gender strategy seeks to increase the role of women and address gender issues to scale adoption of clean cooking technologies.

- 1 Build Evidence and Share Data:** The Alliance is building the evidence base for how clean cooking addresses gender equality and women's empowerment, by gathering data on how gender-informed approaches provide a return on investment for businesses in the clean cooking sector. The Alliance also shares best practices and lessons learned on gender aspects of clean cooking.
- 2 Capacity Building:** The Alliance provides targeted gender capacity building, training, and tools to support women entrepreneurs and to help partners address gender issues and integrate women in the clean cooking sector.
- 3 Advocacy and Awareness-Raising:** The Alliance works to mainstream and prioritize clean cooking among gender and youth organizations, and to ensure that global frameworks and initiatives address the gender implications of energy use.
- 4 Financing for Gender Equality:** The Alliance works with partners and makes targeted grant investments in women-owned enterprises and companies employing gender-informed business models.
- 5 Set and influence policies:** The Alliance seeks to elevate clean cooking as a global issue for women and girls by: (i) building strategic partnerships with gender advocacy groups; (ii) strengthening funding for women's economic activities within the energy sector; and (iii) advocating for the integration of energy access and gender equality into relevant global frameworks.

Clean Cooking and the SDGs

Universal access to clean cooking is integral to improving health, enhancing livelihoods, protecting the environment, and advancing women's empowerment – all of which are vital to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Studies show that time poverty due to unpaid domestic work is a major barrier to women's empowerment and broader economic development. Cooking and fuel collection are key components of unpaid work and thus must be addressed if we are to reach SDG 5 (achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls).



About the Clean Cooking Alliance

The Clean Cooking Alliance works with a global network of partners to build an inclusive industry that makes clean cooking accessible to the three billion people who live each day without it. Established in 2010, the Alliance is driving consumer demand, building a pipeline of investible businesses, and fostering an enabling environment that allows the sector to thrive. Clean cooking transforms lives by improving health, protecting the climate and environment, empowering women, and helping families save time and money. Learn more about our work at www.CleanCookingAlliance.org.

