

Accelerating Africa's universal access to clean cooking solutions

Urgent action is needed ahead of COP27

With fewer than ten years until we reach 2030, the world remains far off track to meet SDG7 which commits to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all. **To date, the level of commitment and investment in clean cooking has not matched the global magnitude of the challenge.**

Nearly 1 billion people still lack access to modern cooking solutions in Sub-Saharan Africa, and almost 500,000 Africans die prematurely due to household air pollution every year. Considering the annual toll on human health, forests, climate and local economies, clean cooking solutions should be central to national climate and energy strategies and recovery plans.

The AU-EU Summit provided a unique opportunity to make progress on climate protection, health, the environment, and women's empowerment. **However, ambitious commitments and concrete actions to achieve universal access to clean cooking are still lacking, despite presenting powerful levers to achieving both climate and development goals.**

A government-led approach is required to ensure we provide clean cooking solutions to all, achieve SDG7 by 2030 and leave no one behind.

Below we identify 5 immediate actions needed from governments to accelerate action on clean cooking – with the support of international finance and development institutions, and the private sector

- 1. Create and resource governmental clean cooking 'delivery units'** that lead and coordinate clean cooking efforts across agencies and departments. These **'delivery units' would help shape funding and action where commitments exist, and promote the adoption of effective and robust policy frameworks.** The EU and international community must commit the resources – both financial and technical support - to support African governments to set-up these 'delivery units', make investments to fund successful delivery of ambitious policies and programmes, and operate in service of commitments that national governments have made in partnership with these 'delivery units'.
- 2. Integrate clean cooking into Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and national energy planning.** NDCs can create transformational change in a country's climate and energy plans and must include ambitious targets for clean cooking. NDCs should seek to align as much as possible with the Paris climate goals. **African governments when submitting their revised NDCs in view of COP27 should ensure clean cooking is fully embedded in the programme, with robust targets to meet climate and development goals.**

Likewise, **governments should engage in integrated energy and electrification planning that addresses the full suite of household energy needs, including clean cooking,** to maximize health and livelihood benefits from achieving energy access.

- 3. Enact favourable and stable fiscal policies to sustain business growth and increase affordability.** Governments can support the development of a robust clean cooking industry through **tax and import duty exemptions, accelerated depreciation, and smart subsidies** that are directed towards solutions that meet both climate and energy access objectives. These approaches have been deployed, with much success, in the off-grid, renewable power sector.

We have learned that purely market-based models will not deliver affordable solutions at the level and speed required to achieve universal access to clean cooking by 2030. Given the multiple social, health, environmental, and developmental benefits associated with clean cooking, **deploying innovative supply and targeted demand-side subsidies is justified to enable wider access, as has also been the case in the off-grid solar sector.**

- 4. Increase funding to match the magnitude of the clean cooking challenge.** Clean cooking must rise up the funding agenda, as a priority within integrated national energy plans that include a holistic approach to electricity. **Governments should ask international finance and development institutions to provide concessional finance and blended finance solutions to enable investment in clean cooking.**

Developed economies should also reduce subsidies on fossil-based options and redirect funds towards enhanced and scalable electrification and clean cooking solutions.

- 5. Enable sustainable market conditions that deliver clean and affordable clean cooking solutions.** The sector needs increased investment at various stages of enterprise growth, and greater engagement with industry actors to promote innovation and scale-up. **Results-based financing (RBF), including carbon finance and use of carbon offsets, will be critical to addressing the funding needs of enterprises and the affordability gap for consumers.** Resources for evidence-based research and evaluation would ensure effective targeting of activities.

Governments should engage clean cooking solutions with the ultimate goal of ensuring affordable access to the cleanest and lowest carbon sources for cooking through improved electrification and technologies, including liquid petroleum gas (LPG), ethanol and biogas as transitional options. The current geopolitical crisis and its implications for energy prices have led to a sharp cost increase for LPG, raising the scale of subsidies needed to encourage its take-up, and created knock-on effects for electricity prices. Greater investment in renewable energy generation and ramping-up electrification of cooking technologies would provide more stable conditions for the spread of clean cooking, given the urgent need to move from kerosene, charcoal and wood fuel.

In some countries LPG is a necessary transition fuel given that other options are more harmful to health and livelihoods. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA) analysis, in most cases, LPG for cooking is a better option in terms of GHG as well as non-GHG emissions compared to traditional use of biomass in places where no other clean cooking solutions are available.

At the Clean Cooking Alliance (CCA) Forum, taking place in Accra, Ghana from 11-13th October, we urge governments to align with a greater sense of urgency and innovation, elevating support for clean cooking to deliver energy, climate and development goals on the road to COP27.

Bold action must be taken by national and continental political leaders to ensure the 900 million Africans that currently lack clean cooking solutions have the means to prepare food in a safe, clean and affordable way.

The time to act is now. We will succeed by working together through sustained, well coordinated efforts that harness the strengths and resources from a broad range of public and private actors, and channel significantly increased funding to the sector.

About the Africa-Europe Foundation: The Africa-Europe Foundation is a consortium entity co-founded by Friends of Europe and the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, in partnership with the African Climate Foundation and the ONE Campaign and with a multitude of stakeholders from civil society, business, policymaking and the youth sector across Africa and Europe. The purpose of the Africa-Europe Foundation is to facilitate multi-stakeholder dialogue, catalyse partnerships and unlock new opportunities that can transform Africa-Europe relations into action.