



Gender and Clean Cooking

The Problem

2.3 billion people globally rely on fuels like wood, charcoal, coal, and kerosene to cook food. Cooking this way leads to dangerous levels of smoke inhalation and exposure, killing up to 3.2 million people annually, with women and children being the most affected. Lack of access to clean cooking solutions disproportionately impacts women & girls' health, education, employment, and overall well-being. It also reinforces gender stereotypes and traps women in time poverty. Using wood to cook leads to forest degradation, forcing women and girls to walk ever-greater distances carrying heavy loads. In conflict settings, women face an increased vulnerability to physical attacks when leaving their communities or refugee camps in search of fuel. Polluting fuels and inefficient cookstoves also impact maternal health, as excessive smoke inhalation is linked to adverse birth outcomes.

The Solution

Providing women access to modern energy is a critical but often overlooked means of empowering them and advancing gender equality. With clean cooking technologies, women can eliminate their exposure to indoor household air pollution, cut down on cooking time, reduce the number of trips to fetch firewood and 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 due to 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

- **60% of deaths** from household air pollution are women and children.
- Women and children spend up to **10 hours per week** gathering fuel in developing countries.
- **\$0.8 trillion** of annual losses from lost productivity for women.
- **42% of households** reported incidents of gender-based violence during firewood collection in Chad over six months.
- **Pregnant women** using polluting fuels for cooking risk developing hypertension and premature births for their babies.

Priorities for Action

CCA's [gender work](#) seeks to empower women by increasing their role in scaling up the adoption of clean cooking technologies:

- 1. Increase Gender Lens Investing in Clean Cooking**
Clean cooking companies struggle to attract large-scale funding, imperative for their businesses to scale and reach customers. Gender lens investing can help bridge this gap by improving the financial viability of clean cooking companies and focusing on women's needs.
- 2. Integrate Gender Mainstreaming for Businesses**
Clean cooking companies often lack the resources to adopt approaches informed by women's collective experiences and perspectives. Implementing gender mainstreaming strategies helps businesses create diverse workforces, improve

distribution networks, and address challenges reflective of their consumers' needs.

- 3. Strengthen Enabling Environment via Advocacy & New Partnerships**
Collaboration among multiple stakeholders is crucial for addressing the complex issue of clean cooking. Through new and existing partnerships, CCA will endeavor to shape conversations and actions around clean cooking, addressing various life cycle needs of women as customers, consumers, and providers in the clean cooking industry.
- 4. Cultivate the Professional Talent of Women Leaders**
It is crucial to elevate the perspectives of women change-makers and thought leaders to motivate and encourage more women to pursue and excel in the clean cooking industry. CCA will continue to support and enable women thought leaders, entrepreneurs,



and businesswomen through various mentorships, technical assistance, training, and other professional development needs.

- 5. Elevate Gender Research & Evidence**
Gender-focused research and evidence are critical to inform the design and implementation of clean cooking solutions so that they can lead to higher adoption rates and improved health outcomes. CCA intends to highlight existing research, understand gaps in scholarship & evidence, and collaborate with partner organizations to work towards producing relevant knowledge products.



Clean Cooking and the SDGs

Universal access to clean cooking is integral to improving health, enhancing livelihoods, protecting the climate and the environment, and advancing women's empowerment—all of which are vital to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Studies show that time poverty due to unpaid domestic work, such as cooking and fuel collection, hinders women's empowerment and economic development. Addressing these issues is essential to reaching SDG 5 and achieving gender equality for all women and girls.

About the Clean Cooking Alliance

CCA works with a global network of partners to build an inclusive industry that makes clean cooking accessible to the 2.3 billion people who live each day without it. Established in 2010, CCA is driving consumer demand, mobilizing investment to build a pipeline of scalable businesses, and fostering an enabling environment that allows the sector to thrive. Clean cooking transforms lives by improving health, protecting the climate and the environment, empowering women, and helping consumers save time and money.

For more information, please visit CCA online at [CleanCooking.org](https://www.CleanCooking.org)

 [@cleancooking](https://twitter.com/cleancooking)

 [@cleancookingalliance](https://www.facebook.com/cleancookingalliance)

 [@cleancookingalliance](https://www.instagram.com/cleancookingalliance)

 info@cleancooking.org