

# Frequently Asked Questions

## What is the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves?

The Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves is a new public-private initiative to save lives, improve livelihoods, empower women, and combat climate change by creating a thriving global market for clean and efficient household cooking solutions. The Alliance's '100 by 20' goal calls for 100 million homes to adopt clean and efficient stoves and fuels by 2020, toward a long-term vision of universal adoption of clean and efficient cooking solutions. The Alliance will work in cooperation with other leading non-profit organizations, foundations, academic institutions, corporate leaders, governments, and UN agencies to help overcome the market barriers that currently impede the production, deployment, and use of clean cookstoves in the developing world.

## Who are the Founding Partners of the Alliance?

Founding Partners include those organizations, companies, and UN and government agencies that were part of the Alliance at the time of the September 2010 launch. These partners include (in order they joined the Alliance):

- United Nations Foundation\*
- Shell Foundation\*
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)\*
- U.S. Department of State\*
- World Health Organization (WHO)
- German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)\*
- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ)\*
- Morgan Stanley/Morgan Stanley Foundation\*
- UN-Energy
- World Food Programme (WFP)
- UN Environment Programme (UNEP)
- UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
- U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)\*
- U.S. Department of Energy\*
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (National Institutes of Health, and Centers for Disease Control & Prevention)\*
- UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- SNV: Netherlands Development Organisation\*
- Shell\*
- Government of Peru
- Government of Norway\*

\* Founding Funder

## What are the problems that the Alliance seeks to address?

Exposure to smoke from traditional cookstoves and open fires – the primary means of cooking and heating for nearly three billion people in the developing world – causes 1.9 million premature deaths annually, with women and young children the most affected. Cookstove smoke contributes to a range of chronic illnesses and acute health impacts such as early childhood pneumonia, emphysema, cataracts, lung cancer, bronchitis, cardiovascular disease and low birth weight. The World Health Organization estimates harmful cookstove smoke to be the fourth worst overall health risk factor in developing countries.

Reliance on biomass for cooking and heating increases pressures on local natural resources (e.g., forests, habitat) and forces women and children to spend many hours each week collecting wood. Women and girls also face severe personal security risks as they forage for fuel from refugee camps and in conflict zones. Inefficient cookstoves also

contribute to climate change through emissions of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide and methane, and aerosols such as black carbon.

## **How do 'clean cookstoves' and other clean cooking solutions save lives, empower women, improve livelihoods, and combat climate change?**

The use of efficient cookstoves can dramatically reduce fuel consumption and exposure to harmful cookstove smoke. Typically, cookstoves in developing country markets cost from a few dollars to \$100, with the higher-performing stoves (95% reduction in emissions) generally costing more than those that provide important, but lower benefits (40-50% reduction in emissions). Recent scientific evidence confirms that the greater the emissions reductions, the greater the health benefits.

More efficient stoves also reduce the time people (usually women and girls) have to spend collecting fuel. In cases where fuel is purchased, the cost of an efficient cookstove can be covered by the savings in fuel within a few months. Cleaner stoves may last for several years, allowing the accumulated fuel savings to be spent on a range of livelihood-enhancing activities (e.g., income producing enterprises for women, medicine, and school attendance for children).

The reductions in emissions achieved by clean cookstoves can also create revenues from carbon credits. Stove companies can use this revenue in many ways, for example to reduce the stove price (thus making these products more affordable to poorer consumers), or to expand into new markets.

More broadly, the entire clean cookstove supply-chain should be a source of economic opportunity and job creation at the local level. In all cases—central mass-production or local production—local business partners will be needed for distribution, sales, and service of stoves, as well as supply of processed fuels, where appropriate. A thriving global industry for clean cooking solutions will provide these benefits on a sustainable basis, providing jobs to many thousands of individuals. The Alliance is particularly interested in creating such local economic opportunities for women.

Other steps – installing a chimney, opening windows, keeping children away from cooking fires, and drying wood before using it – can also help reduce direct exposure to smoke, but they do little to mitigate the other many air quality, forestry, livelihood, or climate impacts of traditional cookstoves. The development of a thriving global clean cookstove industry that is constantly innovating to improve design and performance, while lowering the cost of stoves, is therefore seen as the most sustainable way to tackle this issue.

## **Why haven't the impacts of cookstove smoke received more attention?**

The effects of exposure to harmful cookstove smoke have historically received limited funding and research attention when compared to other risk factors (e.g., lack of clean water, sanitation, and hygiene) or diseases (e.g., malaria) that lead to similar levels of disease. This is due to several reasons:

- Lack of awareness among both affected populations and the donor community about the impact of harmful cookstove smoke and the corresponding benefits of clean cookstoves;
- Past "improved" stoves that did not meet consumers' needs or local cooking patterns;
- Inadequate research into the health and environmental impacts of inefficient cookstoves;
- The lack of affordable, advanced solutions that yield clear benefits;
- Limited monitoring and evaluation of stoves programs; and
- Short-term subsidies and giveaways that have impeded the development of a sustainable market for cleaner cookstoves.

## **Why is the timing right for a Global Alliance?**

Several factors are aligning as never before to put the sector within reach of a "tipping point" for adopting clean cookstoves at scale. These factors include:

- Recent advances in clean cookstove design, testing, and monitoring;
- Compelling new research on the health and environmental benefits of clean cookstoves;
- Recent commercial success and development of a number of business models in the field;

- The advent of national cookstove programs in India, Mexico, Peru and elsewhere;
- The increasing need for effective near- and long-term action to address climate change at the local and regional level; and
- The potential for carbon finance to fund stove initiatives at greater scale.

## What does the Alliance seek to achieve by 2020?

The Alliance's primary goal is to work collectively with its partners to stimulate a thriving global market for clean cookstoves and fuels. This will help it achieve – and ideally surpass – its '100 by 20' target. For the Alliance, a thriving global market is one that consists of a range of organizations – from cottage industries to large-scale companies – that are sustainably supplying clean, efficient, affordable and user-desired cooking solutions (stoves and fuels) at greater scale and that are constantly innovating to improve design and performance, while lowering cost. Ultimately, these solutions will need to be clean enough to meet basic WHO air-quality guidelines. Success will also mean demonstrating the health, climate and economic benefits of these solutions through a robust research, monitoring and evaluation agenda. To achieve this progress, the Alliance will seek to increase investments in this field to a level commensurate with the nature and severity of the problem.

## What will the Alliance do to reach its 2020 goals?

To achieve its '100 by 20' target, the Alliance will develop a business plan that will seek to: address the global prerequisites for the field to reach large-scale adoption of clean cookstoves; identify target markets and develop and implement a specific operational strategy for each that emphasizes participation of women and market-based solutions; and implement a prioritized and globally coordinated research roadmap across all key sectors. The Alliance intends to have a rigorous third-party monitoring and evaluation effort that focuses on a wide variety of operational metrics.

The global work will include establishing industry standards, spurring large-scale innovative financing mechanisms, championing the cause across the donor and development communities, developing indoor air-quality guidelines, addressing global trade and tariff barriers, field-testing cleaner stoves and fuels, laying out a groundbreaking research roadmap and implementing a consensus agenda across key sectors (e.g., health, climate, technology, fuels).

The targeted market work will include creating local stove testing and design centers, developing local financing tools to facilitate the marketing and sale of stoves and fuels, capacity development, reducing or eliminating local market barriers such as import tariffs, implementing major public awareness campaigns on the benefits of using improved stoves, and rigorous monitoring and evaluation.

## How is the Alliance uniquely qualified to tackle the issue?

An issue that impacts half the world's population requires a coordinated response from the private, public, philanthropic and academic sectors to meet the needs of the field and support large-scale solutions.

Many stove companies are already involved in the Alliance, while several Founding Partners – Shell Foundation, SNV, GTZ, Government of Peru, USEPA, and USAID – have extensive experience in scaling up production and use of clean cookstoves. Others, such as the U.S. Department of State, Government of Norway, and BMZ, bring needed diplomatic and financial support, while Morgan Stanley has been a leader in carbon finance and children's health. The UN Foundation has extensive experience in leading broad-based international health and environmental partnerships and in working with the UN system to affect change at a greater scale. WHO, NIH and CDC are leaders in critical health research and monitoring on cookstove smoke impacts, and UNEP, WFP, and UNHCR are leading the United Nations efforts to address the impacts of cookstove smoke on vulnerable developing country populations. Together, these organizations have – or have access to – a wide array of operational platforms in the developing world from which to lead region-specific operational strategies in cooperation with local stove businesses and other stakeholders.

## How do I join/support the Alliance?

The Alliance is currently seeking additional Founding Partners and is looking to secure major funding support for its important clean cookstove mission. Please contact Leslie Cordes, the UN Foundation's Senior Director of Partnership Development for Energy and Climate, at 202/862-6307 or [lcordes@unfoundation.org](mailto:lcordes@unfoundation.org) to learn more about the initiative or to make a financial pledge.