CLEAN COOKING CRITICAL TO ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE

THE PROBLEM
More than 3 billion people depend on food cooked over open fires and inefficient stoves and fuels, contributing to climate change, Arctic warming, forest degradation and air pollution, as well as to poor health, and gender inequality.

Inefficient combustion of solid fuels like wood, charcoal, animal dung, crop residue, and coal results in a range of climate-damaging emissions. Traditional cooking not only releases greenhouse gases (GHGs) like CO₂, but also short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs). The most significant SLCP emitted by traditional cooking practices is black carbon, a component of particulate matter emissions. Black carbon is the second largest contributor to climate change after CO₂, and burning solid fuels for cooking and heating in homes produces approximately 25% of total black carbon emissions. Since the atmospheric lifetime of black carbon is only a few days, reducing black carbon emissions can bring about a more rapid climate response than reductions in greenhouse gases alone. In addition, unsustainable harvesting of wood for fuel not only contributes to forest degradation, but is a major driver of climate change when burned in inefficient stoves. These woodfuel emissions account for 2% of global emissions, the equivalent of the entire aviation sector.

THE SOLUTION
Climate change disproportionately affects vulnerable populations, who are living on the front lines of these global challenges. Clean cooking — the use of cleaner-burning, more efficient cookstoves and fuels — provides tangible impacts at both the macro- and household-level that empower individuals, women in particular, to improve their well-being and the environment around them. The use of modern and higher performing technologies has the potential to reduce up to 17% of global woodfuel emissions. Meanwhile, the greatest opportunity for reducing contributions to Arctic warming comes from an improved household heating and cooking sector in Asia and the rest of the world.

Thanks to the work of the more than 1,800 partners that make up the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves, more than 80 million households have gained access to clean and/or efficient cookstoves and fuels as of the end of 2016. The global community cannot reach its goal of addressing climate change without addressing the way people cook. Scaling up clean cooking can address climate change while simultaneously providing significant improvements to global health, as well as benefits to women’s empowerment and local economies.
Clean cooking is critical to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, directly delivering across 10 of the SDGs, including Goal 13 on climate. For climate change mitigation, clean cooking will play a key role moving forward, with more than 50 countries including clean cooking in their Nationally Determined Contributions. Below are five key priorities to help mitigate climate change and protect the environment through the scale-up of clean and efficient cookstoves and fuels:

1. Ensure that climate and renewable energy funds, such as the Green Climate Fund, have provisions for clean cooking. Financing must be flexible, accessible, and match the needs of organizations that have the ability to reach the last mile and make sustainable impact.

2. Support private and public investment to enterprises producing and distributing cookstoves and fuels that can deliver measurable climate benefits.

3. Ensure integration of clean cooking and heating within national programming to address deforestation and forest degradation (such as in REDD+ programs).

4. Support competitive carbon pricing and other financing aimed at scaling up clean cooking, heating, and lighting to reduce GHGs, as well as black carbon and other SLCPs.

5. Support the inclusion and financing of interventions to scale clean cooking and address household air pollution in strategies and efforts to implement the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement.

As the world implements the Sustainable Development Goals and addresses climate change, it is particularly important that we invest in proven, scalable solutions like clean cooking that bring cross-cutting and economically inclusive impacts.

ABOUT THE ALLIANCE

The Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves is a public-private partnership hosted by the United Nations Foundation that seeks to save lives, improve livelihood, empower women, and protect the environment by creating a thriving global market for clean and efficient household cooking solutions. The Alliance’s 100 by ’20 goal calls for 100 million households to adopt cleaner and more efficient cookstoves and fuels by 2020. The Alliance is working with its public, private, and non-profit partners to accelerate the production, deployment, and use of clean cookstoves and fuels in developing countries.