



Cooking remains a daily activity for households worldwide, yet for millions of people, it continues to pose serious health, economic, and environmental risks. The International Energy Agency (IEA) estimates that in 2023, more than 2 billion people lacked access to clean cooking facilities, instead relying primarily on traditional cooking methods and fuels such as wood and charcoal. In many parts of the world, biomass and cooking devices are also used for household heating during cold seasons.

Cooking smoke significantly contributes to household air pollution, which is linked to around 2.9 million premature deaths a year. Women and children often suffer the most from the adverse impacts of energy poverty, as they spend a significant proportion of their time at home and are often responsible for cooking and gathering wood.

While many countries have seen progress in electricity access, access to clean cooking has lagged behind. Ensuring equitable and sustainable clean cooking and heating solutions remains a significant and urgent development challenge.

SNV has been at the forefront of the clean cooking sector for over 30 years. In 2025, our portfolio contributed to over **1.98 million people** accessing improved and clean cooking across 11 countries in Africa and Asia. This includes supporting the sale of over 180,000 electric cooking products in 2025.

We strengthen capacities and catalyse partnerships by supporting the development of inclusive markets for clean and improved cooking and heating solutions, contributing to more equitable livelihoods. Within this broader ambition, we focus on three key impact goals.

- **Energy access:** Contribute to universal access to affordable and reliable cleaner cooking products and services for households, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and social institutions.
- **Climate change mitigation and adaptation:** Increase energy-efficient practices and the use of renewable energy in cooking energy consumption to improve resilience and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Economic participation and social inclusion:** Build resilient livelihoods and improved incomes, particularly for young people, women, and disadvantaged groups.

Combining global expertise with local knowledge, SNV provides solutions to increase access to clean, efficient cooking solutions for households, local enterprises, and institutions.

Approach

SNV supports the transition to cleaner, more efficient ways of cooking through a market-based approach that brings together investments in demand, supply, financing, inclusivity, and the enabling environment.

In addition, we engage through youth employment and entrepreneurship projects. Across all our work, we aim to increase gender equality and social inclusion, stimulate climate adaptation and mitigation, and support strong institutions and effective governance.

Our market-based approach enables us to tailor projects to the maturity level of the clean cooking ecosystem in various contexts, identifying key barriers and gaps to strengthen the market system. Critical to our work are local partnerships with governments, institutions, civil society, and businesses, as well as evidence-building to support market-based approaches that extend beyond technology and enable sustained impact. Our clean cooking activities include:

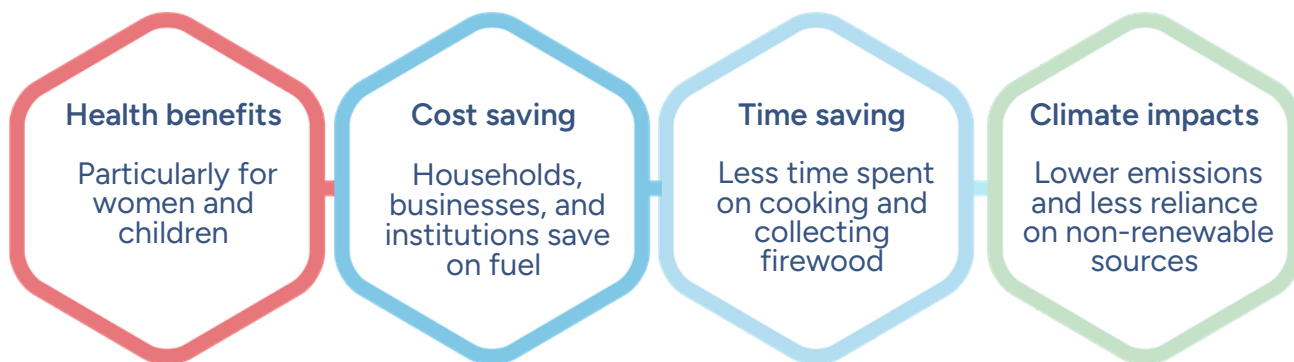
- Raising awareness among households, businesses, and institutions about clean and improved cooking solutions and their benefits, to stimulate demand.
- Implementing Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) interventions, such as gender-sensitive and inclusive training, to strengthen participation in clean cooking markets and associated policies.

- Enhancing the supply of cleaner cooking products and services through training and incentives for suppliers, and facilitating access to finance.
- Improving quality assurance by supporting the development of testing capacity, standards, and labelling schemes and working with standards bodies, relevant agencies, and product suppliers.
- Supporting governments to strengthen the enabling environment for clean cooking through advocacy, policy development, knowledge sharing, capacity building, and multi-stakeholder engagement.

Our market-based approach allows us to tailor projects to the maturity level of the clean cooking ecosystem in different contexts, identifying the key barriers and gaps to strengthen the market system.

Although the challenge is significant, opportunities and expertise exist to accelerate the adoption of cleaner cooking solutions. Continued innovations in clean cooking products, business and financial models, digital tools, partnerships, and data are expanding consumer choice, lowering costs, and opening new distribution channels. Increased access to electricity is creating new opportunities for cooking with electricity, bringing significant benefits to health, the climate, and the environment.





SNV's market-based programmes support clean cooking companies with the resources and partnerships needed to grow. At the same time, they help consumers understand the benefits of clean and improved cooking solutions and make informed choices. These programmes also work to ensure products and services are available in hard-to-reach areas and remain affordable for low-income households. As a result, clean cooking solutions contribute to improved health, stronger livelihoods, and more resilient local markets.

We support the shift to a cleaner mix of cooking alternatives, including cooking with electricity, (bio)gas, and advanced biomass stoves, and improved use of charcoal and firewood where people cannot yet access cleaner options.

SNV contributes to accelerating the clean cooking transition in key support areas:

- **Private sector development:** Meeting financing and support needs across the value chain.
- **Behaviour Change Communication:** Promoting informed choices through locally-led campaigns.
- **Building enabling environments:** Working with governments and sector stakeholders to support the conditions and policies needed for market growth.
- **Nexus programming:** Integrating clean cooking into agriculture, school feeding, air quality, and nutrition programmes.
- **Leave No One Behind (LNOB) groups and humanitarian settings:** To ensure a just and inclusive energy transition, it is important that no one is left behind. Therefore, projects are tailored to support the specific needs of people who have been marginalised or who live in humanitarian and fragile settings.

Future direction

The role of clean cooking in advancing broader development goals is increasingly recognised, creating new opportunities for partnerships. These include:

- **Health:** Reducing household air pollution and improving nutrition through health-focused projects.
- **Climate and environment:** Lowering greenhouse gas emissions, enhancing climate resilience, and preserving biomass resources.
- **Gender Equality:** Empowering women by improving health, saving time, and boosting incomes.



Project experience

Highlighted below are a selection of SNV's projects that have contributed to over 1.98 million people accessing improved and clean cooking in 2025 alone.

Market-Based Energy Access | Kenya | EnDev, MECS, RVO | €3.8M | 2017-2025 |

Since 2017, SNV has supported local clean energy distribution in and around the Kakuma refugee camp and Kalobeyi settlement through the Market-based Energy Access project (MBEA), targeting households, micro-businesses, and social institutions. Through technical assistance, grants, and behaviour change communications, the programme helped clean cooking companies establish operations, set up four stove production centres in Kakuma, and test electric cooking appliances. It also strengthened access to finance via local structures and improved the business environment.

By **June 2025**, approximately **32,555 improved and clean cooking solutions** had been sold through this market-based approach.

BRILHO | Mozambique | FCDO, SIDA | €43.9M (Approx.) | 2017-2026 |

BRILHO aims to stimulate private-sector delivery of quality, affordable off-grid energy products and services to improve the lives of low-income people in Mozambique. To achieve its goal, BRILHO offers selected companies a unique mix of structured non-reimbursable funding and specialised support to de-risk business initiatives that aim to achieve competitive commercial returns and provide off-grid energy solutions, including clean and improved cooking, to low-income markets. Alongside this, BRILHO supports the sector's ecosystem development by improving access to information, setting quality benchmarks, and advocating for a better regulatory framework.

So far, the programme has supported the sale of **384,000 improved cookstoves** and **has reached more than 4.2 million people** with access to clean, sustainable energy in Mozambique.

SEE-CC | Bangladesh | RVO | €970K | 2022-2026 |

The SEE-CC (Strengthening Entrepreneurial Eco-System for Clean Cooking) project, funded by the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) and implemented by SNV in collaboration with Practical Action and the Government of Bangladesh, aims to scale access to higher-tier clean cooking solutions in Gazipur, Faridpur, and Jhenaidah. By supporting local MSMEs, the project strengthens supply chains, promotes behaviour change, and improves access to finance for clean cooking appliances. SNV is leading the Access to Finance component, supporting SMEs that promote electric cooking through a results-based financing fund. SEE-CC works closely with national institutions such as SREDA and IDCOL to implement the National Action Plan for Clean Cooking (NAP-CC 2030).

So far, the project has supported **103 SMEs** and reached **circa 56,700 households** with clean cooking solutions.

Smoke-Free Villages | Cambodia | EnDev, Franke, Lien Aid | €4.97M | 2021-2026 |

The Smoke-Free Village approach supports rural communities in Cambodia to transition from traditional fuels to clean cooking through behaviour change communication, supply chain support, and stronger local governance. It is a gender-sensitive model that mobilises communities to take collective action on household air pollution, starting with awareness-raising. Key stakeholders help spread the message, while local authorities organise events and track household progress. In collaboration with a health sector partner, SNV is exploring integrating clean cooking messaging into healthcare systems.

So far, over **132,000 clean cooking** appliances have been purchased, and more than **54,000 firewood stoves** have been displaced through this approach, which is now expanding beyond Cambodia.

SNV is a global development partner deeply rooted in the African and Asian countries where we operate. With 60 years of experience and a team of approximately 1,600 people, we strengthen capacities and catalyse partnerships that transform agri-food, energy and water systems. Working on the core themes of gender equality and social inclusion, climate adaptation and mitigation, and strong institutions and effective governance, we tailor our approaches to different contexts to achieve large-scale impact and create sustainable and more equitable lives for all.

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