



## **SDG 17, partnership for the goals: ‘Powering Progress Together’ – The Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves and SDG 17**

### **Introduction**

Sustainable Development Goal 17, ‘Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development’, emphasises the critical role of collaboration across governments, civil society, the private sector, and international organisations to achieve the ambitious 2030 Agenda. It recognises that no single entity can address complex global challenges alone, and that integrated, multi-stakeholder partnerships are essential for mobilising resources, sharing knowledge, facilitating technology transfer, and building capacity in developing countries. This case study examines the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves (now the Clean Cooking Alliance – CCA) as a compelling example of SDG 17 in action, highlighting its efforts to tackle a multifaceted development issue through a robust global partnership model.

### **The Challenge: Energy Poverty and Its Far-Reaching Impacts**

Billions worldwide still cook and heat with polluting solid fuels like wood, charcoal, and animal waste (World Health Organization 2024). This practice creates an interconnected web of severe problems: health issues due to indoor air pollution from these fires lead to premature deaths, especially among women and children, causing respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, and even cancer (World Health Organization 2024). Environmentally, the unsustainable collection of biomass fuels drives deforestation, contributes to climate change and desertification, and releases harmful black carbon emissions (Center for Climate and Energy Solutions n.d.). This burden disproportionately affects gender equality, as women and girls spend countless hours gathering fuel, diverting time from education, work, and personal safety (Clean Cooking Alliance 2015). Lastly, the reliance on these fuels hinders economic development by imposing significant household costs and limiting productivity and entrepreneurial opportunities due to inefficient cooking methods (Corkill 2024).

Addressing this challenge requires a systemic approach that goes beyond simply providing cookstoves. It demands a coordinated effort to create a sustainable market for clean



cooking solutions, drive innovation, build local capacity, and influence policy. This is where SDG 17 becomes paramount.

### **The Solution: The Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves – A Multi-Stakeholder Partnership**

Established in 2010, the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves (now the Clean Cooking Alliance) was launched as a public-private partnership initiated by the United Nations Foundation, alongside other founding partners including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Shell Foundation, and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Its core objective was to foster a global market for clean and efficient cooking solutions (United Nations Climate Change 2012).

The Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves, now the Clean Cooking Alliance, actively embodies SDG 17's principles by mobilising diverse financial resources (Target 17.3) from governments, foundations, and the private sector, using a blended finance approach for investment in research, market development, and consumer financing (Fay & London 2018). The partnership is also focused on technology transfer and innovation (Target 17.6 & 17.8), facilitating the development and spread of various clean cooking solutions, establishing quality standards, and promoting technology transfer to local businesses. Furthermore, it emphasised capacity building (Target 17.9), strengthening institutional and human capabilities in target countries through training entrepreneurs, educating consumers, and supporting governments in policy development. The Alliance itself is a prime example of multi-stakeholder partnerships (Target 17.17), bringing together governments to create enabling environments, the private sector for scaling solutions, civil society organisations for community outreach, research institutions for insights, and international organisations such as the UN Foundation, UNDP, and WHO for global coordination. Finally, a strong emphasis was placed on data, monitoring, and accountability (Target 17.18), collecting robust data on stove adoption and impact to inform decisions and ensure transparency, while actively engaging with governments to ensure policy and institutional coherence (Target 17.14) by integrating clean cooking into broader national development plans.



## **Impact and Achievements**

Through its collaborative efforts, the Clean Cooking Alliance has made significant strides, leading to the increased adoption of clean cookstoves by millions of households, thereby reducing their exposure to harmful indoor air pollution. This has resulted in improved health outcomes, with evidence suggesting a reduction in respiratory illnesses among users. The Alliance's work has also delivered notable environmental benefits, including reduced deforestation rates and a decrease in black carbon emissions. Furthermore, it has fostered economic empowerment by creating local jobs within the clean cooking value chain and lowering household fuel expenditures for many families. Finally, the initiative has enhanced gender equality by freeing up time previously spent on fuel collection, enabling women and girls to pursue education, income-generating activities, or leisure (International Center for Research on Women 2015; Zhang 2022).

## **Challenges Encountered**

The Alliance, despite its achievements, encountered several hurdles typical of large-scale global partnerships. Scaling up from initial pilot projects to widespread adoption proved difficult, demanding consistent investment and market development. Behavioural change was another significant challenge, as encouraging households to abandon deeply ingrained traditional cooking methods required ongoing awareness campaigns and clear demonstrations of the new technologies' benefits (Vigolo et al. 2018). Even with innovative financing, affordability remained an issue for the poorest households. Maintaining quality control and ensuring the availability of durable, efficient stoves across various markets was a continuous struggle. Lastly, managing a vast and diverse network of stakeholders across different regions presented considerable coordination complexity, necessitating robust communication and organisational mechanisms.

## **Conclusion: A Model for SDG 17 Implementation**

The Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves (now CCA) serves as an exemplary case study for the application of SDG 17. Its success in advancing clean cooking solutions demonstrates how a revitalised global partnership, encompassing financial resource mobilisation, technology transfer, capacity building, and robust multi-stakeholder engagement,



can effectively address complex development challenges and contribute to multiple SDGs simultaneously. The Alliance's journey highlights the power of collective action, shared responsibility, and a long-term commitment to achieve sustainable development for all.

## Questions

### 1. Understanding SDG 17:

- What are the core principles and objectives of SDG 17, and why is it considered an 'enabler' for the entire 2030 Agenda?
- How does the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves (now CCA) exemplify at least three specific targets within SDG 17? Provide concrete examples from the case study.

### 2. Partnership Dynamics:

- Identify the different types of stakeholders involved in the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves. What unique contributions did each type of stakeholder (e.g., government, private sector, CSOs) bring to the partnership?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of a multi-stakeholder partnership approach compared to a single-actor intervention for a complex issue like clean cooking?

### 3. Challenges and Solutions:

- The case study mentions several challenges faced by the Alliance (e.g., scaling up, behavioural change). Choose two of these challenges and propose potential strategies or approaches that the Alliance, or similar future partnerships, could employ to overcome them.
- How important are data collection, monitoring, and evaluation in a global partnership like the Clean Cooking Alliance? Discuss their roles in terms of accountability, learning, and attracting further investment.

### 4. Interlinkages with other SDGs:

- Beyond SDG 17, identify at least three other Sustainable Development Goals that the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves directly contributed to. Explain the specific connections and impacts.
- How does the 'nexus' of health, environment, gender, and economic development, as described in the case study, illustrate the interconnected nature of the SDGs?



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