



CLEAN
COOKING
ALLIANCE

Youth Strategy

Empowering youth-led change in clean cooking



The Clean Cooking Alliance works with a global network of partners to make clean cooking, *that is, preparing food using cleaner, more modern stoves and fuels, accessible to all.*



The Clean Cooking Alliance's **Youth Strategy** serves as the framework to guide CCA in its work with and for **youth** across the clean cooking ecosystem.

Youth are disproportionately affected by the global lack of access to clean cooking and, more than anyone else, will bear the future burden of inaction. Ninety percent of the world's 1.8 billion youth live in developing countries where 2.4 billion people still rely on polluting fuels and stoves to cook their food. When clean cooking solutions are inaccessible, opportunities for healthy, productive, and fulfilling youth development are considerably limited.

Youth are not only the leaders of tomorrow; they are also leaders of today. Their opportunities, needs, and choices regarding their environment, health, and well-being will shape the world. Engagement is not only their right but is essential to meeting our global goals. Youth play a crucial role in advocating for and achieving universal access to clean cooking.

Yet, the role of youth in clean cooking is still not adequately valued across the sector. As a result, youth often lack access to information and inclusive opportunities to develop critical skills, participate as equal stakeholders, and scale their impact. CCA's Youth Strategy aims to facilitate increased impact and expanded action to address the needs, build the agency, and advance opportunities for youth to lead ambitious clean cooking transitions.

For statistical purposes, the United Nations defines youth as persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years. African Youth Charter expands this to age 35. CCA accepts both definitions and adopts a flexible approach in practice, not strictly relying on age group definitions and taking into account the diversity of lived experiences.

Clean cooking is a **youth** issue

Lack of access to clean cooking solutions limits opportunities for **youth** development and a healthy, productive, fulfilling life.

Health & Food Security

Access to clean cooking is critical for young people's overall health, impacting disease prevention and food security. Household air pollution from using solid fuels for cooking remains a leading risk factor for diseases such as stroke, heart disease, and lung cancer, resulting in 3.2 million premature deaths annually.¹ This includes nearly half of all pneumonia-related deaths in children under 5 years old. Moreover, when firewood and other fuels are scarce or insufficient to cook meals, families are forced to skip meals or eat undercooked food, which undermines food security and access to adequate nutrition. Young people and children require increased quantities of protein and energy to support the production of blood, bone cells, sex steroids, and growth hormones. Inadequate diets during this development period can have negative implications for cognitive health and vitality later in life.²

Climate & Environment

Although young people and children are the least responsible for climate and environmental challenges, they will suffer the most severe consequences. More than half of global black carbon emissions - a significant contributor to climate change - come from domestic solid fuel use. The use of unsustainable biomass fuels for cooking also contributes to forest degradation, while black carbon emissions from cooking end up deposited in the Arctic, contributing to sea ice melt. Dependency on polluting cooking fuels and appliances mean that young people and future generations will inherit a less livable Earth and experience the devastating effects of climate change and environmental degradation.

Displacement

In displacement settings, lack of access to clean cooking is a major challenge, with 81 percent of displaced people relying on firewood and charcoal for cooking, limiting the quality of life and exacerbating local

environmental degradation around camps and settlements. Youth and children represent a significant proportion of those fleeing wars, violence, persecution, human rights violations, and natural disasters. Half of all refugees are under the age of 18, with those aged 18–24 constituting another 13 percent of the total.³ Additionally, nearly 10 million internally displaced persons are between the ages of 15 and 24.⁴





Education & Employment

Reliance on traditional, polluting cooking practices hampers education, employment, and other productive opportunities, as children and young people are overloaded with helping their mothers, who often spend prolonged time on cooking and fuel collection. With more than 70 million unemployed young people worldwide,⁵ youth unemployment is three times higher than adults in almost all countries; young women

are particularly affected.⁶ About 258 million children and youth are out of school,⁷ while nearly 30 percent of the poorest 12- to 14-year-olds have never attended school, with an average upper-secondary enrolment rate of only 14 percent in low-income countries.⁸

1. World Health Organization, *Household Air Pollution and Health Fact Sheet* (2021).
2. Committee on World Food Security, High Level Panel of Experts, *Promoting*

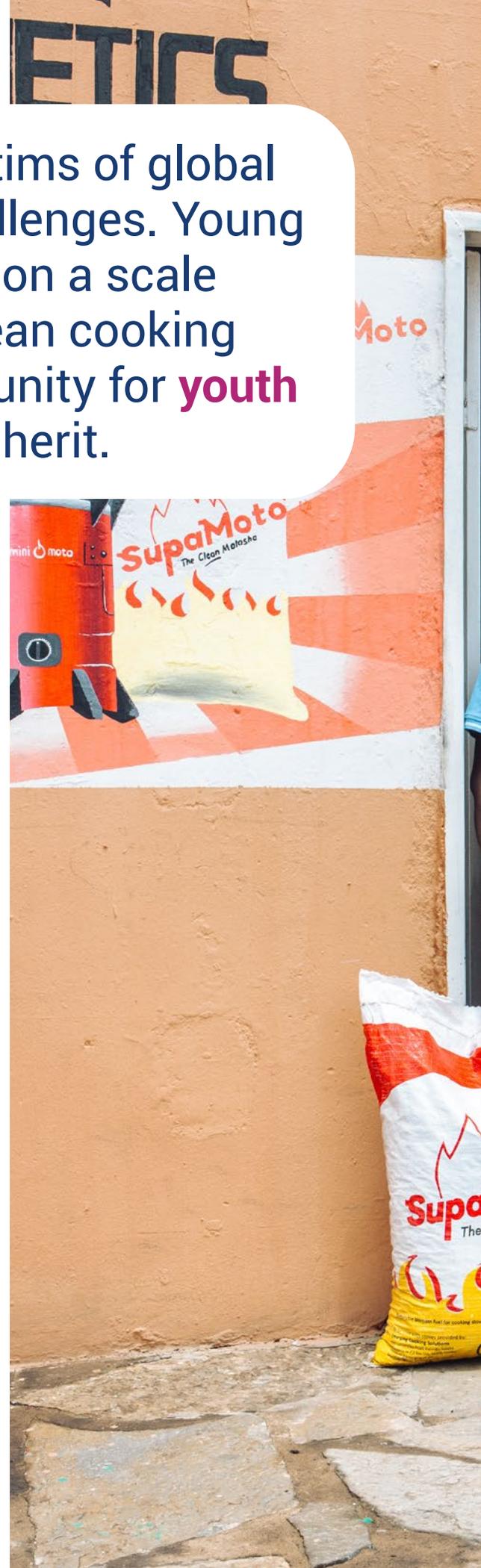
Youth Engagement and Employment in Agriculture and Food Systems (Rome: Committee on World Food Security, 2021).

3. UNICEF, *Unlocking the Power of Digital Technologies to Support "Learning to Earning" for Displaced Youth* (New York: UNICEF, 2021).
4. UNICEF, *Unlocking the Power of Digital Technologies*.
5. United Nations, *World Youth Report* (2018).
6. International Labour Organization, *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2020* (2020).
7. UNESCO Institute for Statistics, *Out-of-School Children and Youth*.
8. United Nations, *World Youth Report* (2018).

Yet, **youth** are not passive victims of global climate and development challenges. Young people worldwide are leading on a scale never seen before, and the clean cooking sector offers a unique opportunity for **youth** to shape the world they will inherit.

Youth play several critical roles in advancing progress on clean cooking:

- 1 Advocates and behavior-change leaders**
Advocating for a sustainable future, youth can play a crucial role in promoting clean cooking as a critical solution to national and global climate and development challenges. Moreover, by acting as behavior-change leaders across their households and local communities, youth action can have a ripple effect of positive behavioral change, which is needed for the adoption and sustained use of clean cooking technologies.
- 2 Innovators and entrepreneurs**
As passionate innovators and entrepreneurs, youth can deliver needed clean cooking solutions that address diverse needs and challenges across their local contexts and beyond, contributing to a vibrant, clean cooking market.
- 3 Consumers**
As both current and future consumers, youth who understand the multiple benefits of clean energy solutions will make informed and favorable decisions and consumer choices.





Guiding principles

The following guiding principles underpin the Youth Strategy and will inform CCA's approach and initiatives.

1

Diversity

Young people are not a homogenous group. Their lived experiences are shaped across varied geographies and socio-cultural norms, resulting in rich and diverse perspectives. The diversity of their lived experiences and perspectives must be embraced and valued.

2

Inclusion and justice

Youth engagement must include young people from marginalized and vulnerable groups, including young women and girls, youth from rural areas, low-income families, and indigenous communities. Recognizing that the poorest countries in the Global South, which have contributed least to the current climate crisis, are bearing the brunt of the consequences, youth engagement needs to ensure representation and benefits for youth from the most vulnerable populations in that region.

3

Meaningful, participatory and intentional engagement

Youth engagement must be meaningful, participatory, and intentional. Young people have a right to be involved in the decisions and actions that impact their lives, even more so when it affects their health, employment, and overall well-being. Enabling youth to participate in decision making ensures meaningful engagement and decisions representative of youth needs.



The **Youth Strategy** relies on a three-stage approach to activate **youth**-led change and ensure meaningful, inclusive, and intentional **youth** engagement in clean cooking.

CCA's Youth Strategy covers three key fundamental aspects of youth engagement in clean cooking:

1

Awareness

Raising clean cooking awareness among youth

2

Empowerment

Empowering youth to take the lead in clean cooking

3

Action

Creating inclusive spaces for youth action on clean cooking

1 Raising awareness among youth

Access to clean cooking is crucial for young people's health, the environment, gender equality, sustainable development, and future employability and quality of life. However, in least-developed countries, using readily available and traditional cooking fuels is often normalized and is an accepted social practice. By being aware of the harmful impacts of using polluting fuels, young people can play an active role in reducing indoor air pollution, mitigating climate change, alleviating the burden on women and girls, and contributing towards achieving sustainable development goals.

What will CCA do?

CCA will work with youth and other partners to develop and support awareness-raising resources and activities, such as factsheets, toolkits, social media campaigns, curricula, participation in relevant conferences and other events, as well as direct community outreach activities when possible.



Examples of CCA's work

- CCA's Youth Newsletter regularly informs youth about relevant news, announcements and opportunities, and highlights youth leadership in the clean cooking sector.
- [CCA sent the first youth clean cooking delegation to the 2022 One Young World Summit to raise awareness among the 2,000+ global youth participants and will send another delegation to the summit in 2023.](#)
- [CCA's Youth Consultation Briefing Document](#) outlines key interlinkages between clean cooking and youth. CCA's Youth Consultation Webinar: "[Building CCA's Youth Engagement Strategy](#)" offered an interactive opportunity for youth to discuss various aspects of clean cooking.

“There's lack of knowledge of clean cooking among youth in Africa. We need to introduce clean cooking curriculum activities across Africa to educate youth on clean cooking. Education is key.”

Patience Alifo

CO-FOUNDER, ECONEXUS VENTURES

2 Empowering youth to lead

Improving access to information, skills, opportunities and finance, can empower youth to apply their unique talents to strengthening the clean cooking sector. However, youth empowerment cannot be achieved without advocating for youth-inclusive policies, formed through research into the changing priorities, challenges, and aspirations of young people. Knowledge and evidence produced through research will allow for learning and the development of informed policies, programs, and activities.

What will CCA do?

CCA will support capacity building to equip youth with relevant knowledge, skills, experience, networks, and access to finance to enter and succeed in the clean cooking sector. Together with partners, CCA will develop relevant training programs, workshops, webinars, entrepreneurial accelerators and incubators, and other professional development opportunities to support youth in the clean cooking sector. CCA will support the development of evidence and knowledge products to inform wider policies and programs on youth engagement and talent development in clean cooking.



“CCA can play a critical role of connecting youth companies with well-established clean cooking companies, enabling youth to have meaningful engagement in the sector.”

Ben Odongo

BUSINESS LEAD FOR ELECTRIC COOKING,
UPENERGY GROUP

Examples of CCA's work

- CCA's [Clean Cooking Women Leaders Award](#) includes a Youth Leader category. The winner receives leadership coaching and sponsorship to attend the Clean Cooking Forum.
- The [Women in Clean Cooking Mentorship Program](#) provides mentorship, training and networking opportunities to early and mid-career women in the clean cooking sector.
- CCA developed a Clean Cooking & Climate Challenge and learning resources for GirlUp clubs around the world.

3 Creating inclusive spaces for **youth** action

Meaningful youth engagement requires inclusive and open spaces for dialogue, so that young people have the opportunities and platforms they need to enact change. It is crucial to elevate youth voices and encourage youth participation across relevant dialogues and decision-making processes and to offer youth access to a diverse set of clean cooking stakeholders. Further, highlighting the stories, leadership and successes of youth creates a positive feedback loop—encouraging more youth to focus on clean cooking and opening new doors for youth to participate at all levels of the sector.

What will CCA do?

CCA will utilize its platforms and networks to elevate and engage youth voices as critical stakeholders in the ecosystem, seeking to increase youth participation in important inter-generational dialogues, decision-making processes, conferences and convenings. CCA will actively incorporate youth insights throughout its programs and highlight youth leadership and engage youth audiences across its channels.

Examples of CCA's work

- CCA sponsored the 2023 [YES! Youth Energy Summit](#) with an interactive clean cooking booth, youth-led panel discussion and a youth clean cooking delegation from Kenya.
- CCA and Student Energy brought the [first ever youth delegation](#) to the [2022 Clean Cooking Forum](#). The 20-person delegation participated in plenary and breakout sessions, the innovation expo, an intergenerational roundtable and networking events.



“I love the way Clean Cooking Forum in Ghana was organized, where youth were given space to participate and interact with different stakeholders. We need to see more of that happening so that youth who are starting their businesses can be linked to the market and financing.”

Kakembo Galabuzi Brian

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, WEYE CLEAN ENERGY

How was the **Youth Strategy** developed?

CCA asked **youth** what support they needed to play an impactful role in clean cooking.

The Youth Strategy incorporates youth voices and perspectives collected throughout a six-month [youth consultation process](#), as well as continuous dialogues with CCA's long-term youth partners. This participatory approach ensures that a diverse set of youth voices contribute to CCA's long-term efforts to drive active youth engagement across the clean cooking ecosystem.



Youth Consultation Process

August
2022



Youth Consultation
Briefing Document



Needs and Capacity
Assessment Surveys
for Youth and Youth
Organizations

January
2023



Youth Consultation
Webinar: "Building
CCA's Youth
Engagement Strategy"

“I would like to thank the Clean Cooking Alliance for putting together such a rich and insightful consultation, providing a space for young people to engage in clean cooking. I'm so excited about the prospects of this work.”

Lisa Nyamadzawo

CLIMATE, ENERGY, AND ENVIRONMENT SPECIALIST, UNICEF



Results Framework

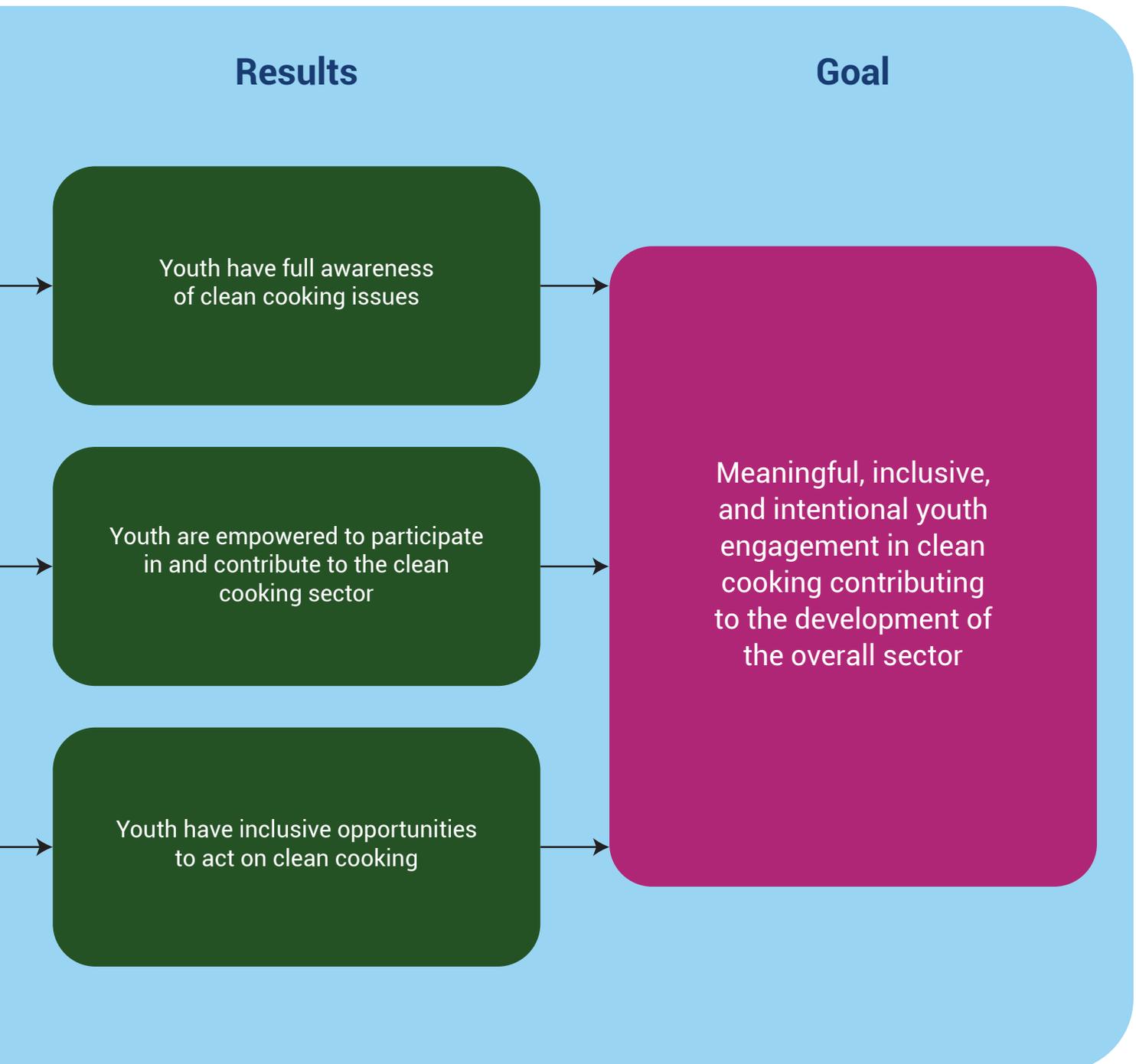
The Results Framework outlines expected activities and their intermediate and final results, directed at achieving meaningful, inclusive, and intentional youth engagement in clean cooking.



“The future and the present belong to young people. They are showing the world that they are valuable contributors to a just clean energy transition.”

Dymphna van der Lans

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, CLEAN COOKING ALLIANCE





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)

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