

**Remarks by Radha Muthiah**  
**Executive Director, Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves**  
**National Clean Cookstoves and Fuels Conference**  
**Safari Park Hotel**  
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**Introduction and Acknowledgements**

Good Morning.

Excellences, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentleman,

It is a pleasure to be with all of you this morning in Nairobi for the beginning of what promises to be an exceptional National Clean Cookstoves and Fuels Conference.

My name is Radha Muthiah, and I'm the executive director of the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves.

I'd like to begin by thanking members of the Alliance Advisory Council members and generous donors—the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, Finland, Norway, and the Shell corporation - who have traveled great distances to witness the transformation in the cooking sector that is currently underway in Kenya.

I'd also like to thank Kitala and the entire Kenya Alliance team. They are a newly formed institution and it is wonderful to see their development this past year and a privilege to co-host this conference with them.

Finally, I want to thank the Alliance's regional market manager for east africa, Mr. Daniel Wanjohi, who along with the rest of the Alliance's team has worked tirelessly to make this conference a reality. Please join me in applauding his leadership.

## **Global Overview, Call to Action**

We are gathered together today because we each believe in the conviction that cooking shouldn't kill.

But we know that in reality, the seemingly simple act of cooking a meal for oneself and one's family constitutes one of the most significant health and environmental challenges in the world today. This challenge is responsible for the premature loss of 4 million lives every year from diseases associated with exposure to smoke and has gone unnoticed by many in the global community for far too long. This is the 4<sup>th</sup> highest health risk in the world. Of course you know that well in Kenya where exposure to open fires and traditional cookstoves is responsible for the premature deaths of tens of thousands of Kenyans and constitutes the second leading cause of death in Kenya.

Cooking is essential. It shouldn't be lethal.

And one of the ways the global clean cooking sector is going to solve this problem is to form partnerships and leverage each other's expertise to deploy culturally-sensitive, clean, safe, accessible and affordable clean cooking solutions.

That, in essence, is what the Alliance is doing. We are a public-private partnership consisting of over 900 organizations across 6 continents, working together to save lives, improve livelihoods, empower women and protect the environment through the creation of a global market for clean cookstoves and fuels.

Such a market will be bolstered by the execution of the Alliance's core functionalities, such as conducting groundbreaking research, setting global cookstove standards, attracting investors, supporting entrepreneurs, advocating for policy change, understanding and servicing consumers in innovative ways, and more.

I know that our name is Global Alliance for Clean cookstoves but in reality we are focused on more than just stoves. We are focused on the entire spectrum of cooking solutions from fuels, to stoves, to heat retention devices.

The Alliance is as diverse as the issue we are trying to solve. We are national governments, private companies, nonprofit organizations and NGOs, manufacturers, investors, celebrities, chefs, humanitarians and entrepreneurs all bound together by the conviction that no person in the 21<sup>st</sup> century should be forced to cook as their ancestors have done since the beginning of human history.

This is particularly true during a time when unprecedented numbers of people are leaving extreme poverty, joining the burgeoning global middle class, accessing better jobs and social services, and aspiring for consumer goods and a better future for their children.

### **Kenya Overview, Progress**

Now, the Alliance is neutral when it comes to technology, fuel, solutions, and partners. We need everyone at the table and everything on the table to achieve our mission and reach our goal of 100 million households adopting clean cooking solutions by the year 2020.

There are over 50 countries that have higher than 50% of solid fuel use for cooking and the Alliance had to prioritize the countries in which it worked to prove that a market based approach to addressing this issue could work and lead to positive economic growth and social impact. Kenya was one of the first countries that we prioritized two years ago. Working closely with partners in the government, private and NGO sectors we came together to develop a Country Action Plan for Kenya – a goal of 7m clean cookstoves and fuels with an initial target of 5m by the year 2020. Many of you seated here today were with us almost two years ago to put the finishing touches on this plan and the same group and more are now working tirelessly to execute it. The Alliance and its partners have committed approximately \$20m in grants, investment and in kind support to enable the market in Kenya.

Kenya is in every way a model partner for the Alliance.

- The government had made a strong commitment to advancing a market for clean cookstoves and fuels, with support from the President, Deputy President, to the Ministries and to Parliament. Such an example from the nation's elected leaders is a crucially important step in having a strong enabling environment.

- There is a burgeoning group of Kenyan-owned and global businesses working to create jobs and improve livelihoods and earn profits throughout the country. In just its first year of providing catalytic grants to help 11 entrepreneurs overcome hurdles and reach scale, 3 of those were working in Kenya!
- Nairobi is a world capital, attracting UN and other multilateral and NGO partners that are advancing some of the diplomatic and humanitarian responses necessary to our work
- Multidisciplinary experts have either completed, are currently conducting, or will soon begin research across the health, environment, gender and livelihoods aspects of the cookstoves issue – and much of that research has or will have an exclusive or strong Kenyan focus.
- Early market assessments and consumer segmentation analysis suggests a strong willingness on the part of Kenyan consumers to adopt clean cooking solutions, and the Alliance and its partners look forward to further refining its market and consumer outreach in the country to better serve end users.
- Kenya has tackled serious problems like this before. Your leadership to ban smoking in public places has led to marked declines in the use of tobacco and provides an important lesson to the rest of the world regarding the importance of government engagement.

I want to give you a quick preview of the four main things you're going to here announced today, that track with what I've just described in terms of the Alliance's objectives moving forward, and the progress being made in the Kenyan sector.

- More than \$3 million in catalytic grants and loans for businesses, some of whom are operating here in Kenya;
- New health and climate research and guidelines – all with implications for Kenya;
- The first official convening of the group tasked with creating definitive global standards to define cookstove cleanliness, safety, emissions performance and more is taking place next week here in Nairobi, and the Kenyan Bureau of Standards has been a leading partner in this endeavor; and
- We are beginning the transition to demand-side cookstove efforts after working diligently to strengthen supply and create an enabling environment both in the country and worldwide, and we are looking to complete our consumer segmentation work and create marketing and awareness campaigns that benefit the Kenyan consumer this year.

## **Conclusion**

So for all these reasons and more, I know that the goals the Clean Cookstoves Association of Kenya has set for itself is quite achievable.

And it's not just achievable because of the passion and expertise that exists among the actors in the Kenyan clean cooking sector. You only need to look to the nation's history and role in the world to see what is possible when you join together, stand up, speak out and say "it's time to make a change for the better."

Kenya is where farmers learned to access fair, market prices for their crops, feeding people and making a living simultaneously; uptake of the cell phone among nearly every citizen of the world can trace its roots to Kenya; and Kenya of course is where the mpesa system originated – where the roots of that cell phone penetration were leveraged to grow into a financial system that allowed people to join marketplaces, trade, sell and consume.

What potential, then, for Kenya to become even more of a leader in the global clean cooking sector.

Like the great marathon runners of your country, you've trained for this moment through your experiences, your expertise and your passion to innovate and save and improve lives and the environment. Now its time to go!

And I want you to know that the Global Alliance is and will always be a willing and able partner in this marathon journey we are on together to 2020.

Thank you all very much.