

MAINTAINING MOMENTUM ON CLEAN COOKING SOLUTIONS

Statement of the Africa-Europe Foundation Women Leaders Network



Clean cooking is at its core a gender issue with far-reaching implications across sectors, from energy to culture, health to nature. In Africa alone, roughly 500,000 women and children die prematurely every year due to cooking-related respiratory illnesses - a global health risk surpassing that of malaria.

Reinforcing the Africa-Europe Partnership on investment in clean cooking solutions has been a permanent feature of the work of the Women Leaders Network since the Africa-Europe Foundation's inception in December 2020. The Summit on Clean Cooking in Africa, held in Paris on 14 May, marked a significant milestone, raising \$2.2 billion in pledges from governments and the private sector, including securing commitments from the African Development Bank, European Commission and member states.

Ensuring effective follow-up will be key. In this regard, AEF Women Leaders underline the following points:

- 1. Maintain momentum:** It remains critical to translate the US\$2.2 billion mobilised at the Summit into the US\$4 billion yearly target that would provide universal access to clean cooking in Africa by 2030. Carbon pricing and markets have the potential to act as a powerful driver to unlock additional financing; but the risk of greenwashing must be mitigated through focusing on methodologies, and the sharing of best practices to ensure integrity, transparency, fairness and sustainability in credits. We invite stakeholders to endorse and adopt the [Principles for Responsible Carbon Finance in Clean Cooking](#).
- 2. Track commitments:** We look forward to the publication of the official pledge tracking tool by Summit organisers to build accountability and trust in multilateral partnerships. Transparency on the breakdown of investments is critical to clarify the terms and conditions of pledges, particularly the ratio of loans to grants, given the number of debt-stressed economies across Africa. As AEF we will continue to strengthen our programming pillar on AU-EU Commitment Tracking to monitor implementation and identify both obstacles and opportunities for scaling impact.
- 3. Engage all players, primarily local, fostering women's leadership:** The role of local actors as front-line implementers of clean cooking solutions must be reflected by prioritising the direct financing of local administrations and woman-led businesses. This will facilitate the integration and implementation of clean cooking solutions in updated health, food system, climate and development strategies, including nationally determined contributions. Moreover, intentional gender-responsive approaches and strategies are needed to ensure clean cooking initiatives prioritise women's empowerment and address gender inequalities. We also invite additional actors to take on clean cooking as a priority agenda and sign onto the final Summit Declaration, including SDG7 stakeholders, the World Health Organisation and multilateral development banks which have the power to leverage financing for a multiplier effect.
- 4. Leverage multilateral milestones:** We welcome the engagement of the G20 and COP29 presidencies, as well as the Paris Pact for People and the Planet, and look forward to working together in the months ahead. The generous replenishment of the International Development Association and the African Development Fund in 2024-2025 are also key opportunities for smart investments in clean cooking.
- 5. Bridge siloes that have historically characterised development-cooperation:** We welcome the announcement of new approaches to clean cooking, including the new Team Europe Initiative in West Africa. Given clean cooking cuts across sectors, it is key to go further in bringing together experts and leaders from diverse sectoral and organisational settings. The new EU policy cycle presents a platform in this regard, with upcoming strategic agendas set to outline the block's direction over the next five years and budget until 2034.

The Africa-Europe Foundation's (AEF) Women Leaders Network (WLN) provides a platform for eminent and strong-minded women to debate some of the world's greatest challenges and to advocate for joint actions by Africa and Europe. We focus on tasks which require urgent attention and offer a frank assessment of what needs to be done to achieve progress for our mutual benefits as partners. Our discussions draw from the diverse roles played by WLN members, and build on remarkable work done by the membership, in fields of multilateralism, finance, climate justice, and local action.

- [WLN clean cooking manifesto](#)
- [2024 Clean Cooking Summit Declaration](#)