Energising change

Reducing the Climate Impact of Cooking in Rwanda (ReCIC)

Country	Rwanda
Technical Focus	Improved Cookstoves (ICS) & Alternative Fuels
Project period	11/2020 to 10/2025
Budget	Total: EUR 5.709 million EU Contribution: EUR 5.0 million BMZ Contribution: EUR 0.709 million
Partners	Ministry of Infrastructure (MININFRA), Ministry of Environment (MoE), Rwanda Energy Group (REG), Rwanda Environmental Management Authority (REMA), Energy Development Corporation Limited (EDCL) and Private Sector
Implementing Organisations	GIZ, SNV
Objective	Establishing a sustainable production and dissemination chain for ICS and fuels
Achievements by 10-2025	• Production and dissemination of 519,154 ICS supported and a cumulative of 1,321,911 t CO_2e saved. • Support of the Rwanda Standards Board (RSB) cookstoves laboratory through technical skills training and equipment • 190 community mobilisation and 195 cooking demonstrating events in 6 districts.

Background

Due to its high population density and limited land availability, Rwanda has long been vulnerable to deforestation. The strong reliance on solid biomass for cooking, combined with inefficient technologies, has contributed to high emissions affecting the climate, environment, and users' health.

At the time of project design, the Government of Rwanda, through its Biomass Energy Strategy (BEST), had set the target of reducing the share of households using inefficient cooking solutions from 83.3% (2014) to 42% by 2024. However, more than 70% of the population still relied on three-stone fires and traditional stoves (Government of Rwanda, survey on cooking fuel and technologies, 2020).

Against this background, the EnDev project *Reducing the Climate Impact of Cooking in Rwanda through improved cooking energy systems* (ReCIC) was implemented from 2020 to 2025. Co-funded by the European Union under the Global Climate Change Alliance Plus (GCCA+) initiative, the project addressed these challenges through a threefold approach: strengthening production capacities of ICS and fuels, raising consumer awareness, and supporting market dissemination.

The project supported a wide range of different ICS types and alternative fuels to foster a viable and sustainable market and promote local production. It contributed to increasing production capacities and aimed to disseminate a cumulative of 500,000 stoves by 2025 through private-sector led sales, while avoiding 200.000 tonnes of CO_2e per year.

In addition, EnDev worked closely with the Government of Rwanda to strengthen the regulatory framework, improve stove testing capacities, and enhance sector coordination to improve overall market conditions.

Boosting local production, distribution, and marketing capacities

- The Cooking Energy Business Growth Fund (CEBGF) provided financial, technical and business development support to more than 10 companies engaged in the production and dissemination of high-quality ICS and fuels.
- Extensive awareness raising campaigns incl. community mobilisation events, TV and radio spots, were implemented to promote behavioural change and highlight the economic, health, and social benefits of clean cooking.

Preparing the market for Tier 3 and above

Following the introduction of ministerial guidelines on clean cooking in December 2022, which set the target to phase out cookstoves below Tier 3 from 2024 onwards, EnDev supported the Government of Rwanda in implementation:

- In collaboration with the World Bank and EDCL, EnDev supported local producers in upgrading Tier 2 stoves to Tier 3 through technical assistance.
- The project fostered the development of “Made in Rwanda” Tier 3 cookstove and fuel solutions.
- Pottery cooperatives whose products could not be upgraded were linked to Tier 3 producers to maintain their participation in the market.

Strengthening sector coordination and quality assurance

Fostering the overall enabling environment, EnDev worked closely with the Government of Rwanda:

- EnDev cooperated with the Rwanda Standards Board (RSB) to enhance technical capacities and provided equipment for cookstove testing laboratories.
- Over the course of the project, more than 24 stove models were tested.
- A new institutional stove model was developed and tested in a school in Kigali.

From potter to promising business owner

Gerard Niyitegeka (38) was a potter in a cooperative previously supported by EnDev. In 2020, he founded his own business, *Environ Green Conserve*, together with his extended family, initially operating from a temporary workspace.

Through market linkages and training facilitated by the ReCIC project, Gerard was able to move to a permanent workshop and expand his business, employing 28 permanent and 11 casual staff. As one of the beneficiaries of the Cooking Energy Business Growth Fund (CEBGF), he used the financial support to upgrade his kilns, increasing his production capacity from 1,500 to 8,000 stoves per month.

By the end of the project, Gerard had further strengthened his market position and was prototyping a new stove model tailored to customer preferences. He noted: *“I am a stronger player in the market. I can now compete with other companies on the same footing, and this new stove type gives me hope that I can have an impact in Rwanda.”*

This example reflects how the project contributed to strengthening local enterprises and building a sustainable improved cookstove market in Rwanda.

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