

## Ethiopia unveils 3.4 bln clean cooking roadmap

BY FIKADU BELAY

**ADDIS ABABA** – Ethiopia has unveiled a bold new strategy to transform household energy use and reduce its heavy dependence on biomass fuels through the National Clean Cooking Roadmap.

The roadmap is a 3.4 billion USD initiative aimed at improving public health, protecting the environment, and spurring economic growth.

Launched by the Ministry of Water and Energy (MoWE), the roadmap outlines plans to expand access to modern cooking technologies to 93% of the population by the end of its implementation, a major shift from the current 90% reliance on traditional fuels such as firewood, charcoal, and dung.

MoWE State Minister Eng. Sultan Wali (PhD) said the use of traditional cooking methods poses enormous challenges. “Over 100 million Ethiopians, mainly women and children, are exposed to indoor air pollution, which causes an estimated 63,000 premature deaths every year,” he noted. “The economic impact is also staggering—around 29.9 billion USD lost annually due to household air pollution.”



Initiative aimed at improving public health, protecting environment, spurring economic growth

According to Sultan, the roadmap addresses these multifaceted issues through several approaches: wider availability of clean stoves and fuels, supportive legislation and strategies, and behavioral change campaigns to ensure community acceptance of clean technologies.

The initiative also carries substantial development and economic benefits. It is projected to create over 335,000 jobs, save 13.2 billion hours of time annually—much of it for women—and significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions, contributing to Ethiopia's climate goals.

Health State Minister Dereje Duguma

(MD) linked the clean cooking strategy to the broader goals of the Health Extension Program, which has played a vital role in achieving Ethiopia's Millennium and Sustainable Development Goals (MDGs and SDGs). With over 40,000 health extension workers across the country, the Ministry aims to educate communities about the health hazards of traditional stoves and promote the shift toward cleaner alternatives.

“Clean cooking is now part of the health agenda,” Dereje said. “We can use our health platform to bring change, improve maternal and child health, and drive behavioral

transformation.”

The Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) also emphasized the environmental impact of unsustainable cooking practices. MoA State Minister Prof. Eyasu Elias said traditional fuel use contributes to deforestation, climate change, and soil degradation, undermining agricultural productivity. “We are distributing improved stoves under programs like the World Bank-supported Sustainable Land Management Project,” he said, “but demand far exceeds current supply.”

While around 50,000 households have already received clean stoves, Eyasu stressed that scaling up is critical to reversing the environmental toll and ensuring rural communities adopt more sustainable cooking practices.

The roadmap's implementation will require multi-sectoral cooperation and significant financing. Sultan said the \$3.4 billion investment includes technology distribution, consumer financing schemes, awareness campaigns, and monitoring systems.

“This is not just an energy project. It is a transformative national development agenda,” he concluded.

## Germany supports new school kitchen for vulnerable children

BY STAFF REPORTER

**ADDIS ABABA** -The German Embassy in Ethiopia has signed an agreement to support the construction of a new school kitchen at the German Church School in Addis Ababa, a move set to benefit around 300 vulnerable children, including those with disabilities.

Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Ethiopia and Permanent Observer to the African Union, Jens Hanefeld signed the contract yesterday here in Addis, marking Germany's continued commitment to social and educational development in the country.

The new facility aims to improve the nutritional intake of students, many of whom come from underprivileged families. It is expected that the availability of regular meals will enhance students' academic performance, health, and overall well-being, thus improving their long-term prospects.

“The German Embassy is pleased to support the German Church School's holistic educational and social mission,” the Embassy said in a statement. “This initiative represents our dedication to inclusive development and social equity.”

Founded in 1972 by the German Evangelical Church in Ethiopia (Evangelische Gemeinde Deutscher Sprache in Äthiopien), the German Church School serves as a comprehensive educational and social support center. It currently educates nearly 300 children,



New facility to enhance students' academic performance, health, overall well-being

adolescents, and young adults from some of Addis Ababa's most disadvantaged communities.

Beyond academics, the school provides vital medical and social services through its in-house health and social care units. Its students are supported from primary level through to vocational training or university, reflecting its holistic pedagogical approach.

The school's operations are entirely funded by donations and supported by international partners, including Melkam Edil and the Christian Blind Mission (CBM). These contributions enable the school to continue its mission under the guiding principle: “Giving the poor a chance!”

## Construction sector needs urgent tech shift: MoUI

BY MESERET BEHAILU

**ADDIS ABABA** – The Ministry of Urban and Infrastructure (MoUI) has called for the urgent integration of technology and research into Ethiopia's construction sector to tackle persistent challenges and unlock the industry's full economic potential.

Speaking at the National Technology Introduction and Transformation Forum, organized by the MoUI's Construction Management Institute (CMI), MoUI State Minister Yetmgeta Asrat emphasized that a technology-led construction sector is vital for driving national prosperity and sustainable development.

Held under the theme: “Technologies and the Expansion of Research Findings: Indispensable Tools for Industry Modernization”, the forum brought together experts, industry players, and policymakers to explore pathways for improving project delivery and sector performance.

According to Yetmgeta, the construction industry plays a strategic role in Ethiopia's economy, contributing 20% of GDP and generating 10% of national employment. With over 35,000 companies active in the sector, the industry spans a wide range of activities including infrastructure, mega projects, corridor development, and housing.

However, he acknowledged that the sector continues to grapple with major bottlenecks—project delays, cost overruns, and quality issues. “Despite abundant resources and potential, the industry struggles due to inefficiencies. Leveraging research-driven solutions and modern technology can significantly reduce these challenges,” he stressed.

The House of Peoples' Representatives Urban, Infrastructure and Transport Affairs Standing Committee Chairperson Prof. Mohammed Abdo echoed these concerns, noting that while the sector has shown progress, targeted support is urgently needed to ensure its transformative impact.

He also highlighted the importance of import substitution, competitive capacity, and adopting homegrown innovations alongside international best practices. “Competitiveness can only be achieved through technological innovation and knowledge integration,” he stated.

Speaking on behalf of CMI, Eng. Feleke Assefa, Head of the Technology Transformation and Introduction Desk, emphasized the need to systematically implement research findings and digital innovations. “Delays, financing gaps, and quality issues remain the core challenges. Innovation is our best solution,” he said.

Feleke noted that digital tools such as Virtual Assistance (VA), Augmented Reality (AR), and other construction technologies can significantly reduce project timelines, cut costs, enhance safety, and improve collaboration across the sector.

The forum also featured nine research findings aimed at addressing technical and operational gaps in the construction industry, with stakeholders across public and private sectors in attendance.

Experts at the event concluded that the future of Ethiopia's construction industry hinges on the sector's ability to adopt cutting-edge technologies, enhance institutional coordination, and promote knowledge sharing for greater productivity and sustainability.