



# Safe Access To Fuel and Energy (SAFE) Uganda

## Saving lives through SAFE cooking

WFP works to ensure that the food assistance provided can be consumed as safely and nutritiously as possible. While cooking may be thought of as a safe activity, in many circumstances, especially humanitarian settings, it poses serious health, safety and environmental risks.

## FACTS Uganda

- **Over 90% of household energy is derived from biomass (firewood and charcoal)**, most of it used for cooking.
- **Rural livelihoods can be heavily dependent on firewood.** A 2009 assessment in Moroto (Karamoja) showed that 50% of the population was engaged in the sale of forest products.
- **Firewood collection involves the risk of gender-based violence and attack**, especially against women and girls.
- **Adoption of fuel-efficient stoves in rural Uganda is limited** and cooking on the traditional three-stone fire is fuel- and time-intensive.
- According to WHO, **the indoor smoke produced by cooking with biomass globally leads to 4.3 million premature deaths per year.**

**Until 2015, Uganda has supported 154,146 people through the SAFE initiative. WFP has globally reached over 6 million people with SAFE in 18 countries.**

## The challenge

Karamoja is a chronically poor and food insecure region located in northeastern Uganda. In the past few years, frequent natural disasters, unpredictable weather and severe environmental degradation have considerably constrained the traditional livelihoods in pastoralism and agro-pastoralism, with charcoal production being the main alternative. Due to high deforestation in the area, a lack of access to firewood is threatening the safety, health, nutrition and livelihoods of vulnerable populations.

Firewood collection, traditionally carried out by women and children, is associated with grave protection risks. Sexual violence against women and girls during collection were commonly reported in Karamoja. Collection typically occurs at least twice a week, but also daily for some women. When wood is scarce, households may skip meals, undercook or sell food to buy or save on firewood, jeopardizing their nutrition. In addition, due to the inhalation of toxic emissions, cooking on open fires exposes women and children to higher risks of respiratory diseases and other health problems.



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## Working on sustainable solutions

The **success of SAFE in Uganda** relies on an innovative combination of energy-related and income-generating activities addressing various challenges linked to access to cooking fuel. These activities focus on nutrition, livelihoods, health, gender, environment and education.

## SAFE in Uganda

Integrated with WFP's livelihood programme in the drought-affected Karamoja sub-region, SAFE activities have included:

1. Provision of **fuel-efficient mud stoves** to households
2. **Training sessions** for women on cookstove production and energy-saving cooking practices
3. **Protection training and sensitization** about the linkages between energy-saving stoves and a reduction in the exposure of women to protection-related risks
4. **Creation of community tree nurseries** for livelihood diversification and increased access to firewood



## Progress to date

- Distribution and production of 65,257 **fuel-efficient mud stoves** to households have decreased the duration and number of firewood collection trips, **reducing the associated exposure to gender-based violence risks.**
- **Trained artisans now make and sell their own improved stoves** as an additional income-generating activity.
- Training and awareness-raising sessions have **improved community-based protection strategies.**
- As part of the livelihood programme in Karamoja, **the communities could plant woodlots in exchange for food or cash with 679,138 trees planted.**
- **Vegetable gardening and cultivation of staple crops** were promoted to provide viable livelihood alternatives for women.

## Future objectives Uganda

Uganda is planning to further develop its SAFE programmes in the coming years. This includes environmental restoration and livelihood diversification activities by supporting 100,000 individuals through awareness-raising and trainings on tree planting and seed handling.

**WFP has globally committed to support 10 million people through SAFE activities by 2020.**

**A global survey conducted by WFP in 2015 in 54 countries highlighted that two thirds of these countries had energy-related concerns affecting people's food security, nutrition or safety. WFP has cookstove activities in 27 of its country offices.**