

Financing clean Energy Transition for rural households in Western Kenya; Insights from the Bidhaa Sasa Social Enterprise Model

Thursday 24 April 2025 09:45 (20 minutes)

Polluting fuel use in households poses health, environmental and socio-economic problems. The use of clean cooking fuel is largely limited due to cost. To effectively reach the rural population, financing models supportive of the low-income earners need to be put in place. Bidhaa Sasa Social Enterprise Model (BS) is a social marketing approach that distributes clean cooking equipment to the rural poor and has been in operation in Western Kenya since 2017. This study evaluated how Bidhaa Sasa initiative supported rural households in Western Kenya to adopt clean, improved cooking fuel and technologies.

This study adopted a mixed method approach. 1006 households, who bought cooking products from Bidhaa Sasa either in Kapsabet or Moi's Bridge hub, were surveyed. The participants were identified from the Company customers through their coordinators and Group Leaders. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and Inferential statistics. Thirteen participants from the survey were purposively sampled for in-depth interviews. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically.

Significant number (93%) of those who bought clean stoves are still in possession of them, and up to 97% are using them. The study found household income as the main predictor of the main cook stove used before Bidhaa Sasa ($P=0.029$), however, the association could not hold after the initiative ($P=0.409$) instead there was a significant improvement in the use of cleaner fuel ($P=0.000$). Qualitative findings indicates that the initiative was popular due to flexible repayment period, good customer relations, quality products and product demonstrations. Enablers of transition to clean fuels included; health issues, convenience, challenges in procuring the previous fuel and cost.

There was a significant improvement in transition to use of cleaner fuels after Bidhaa Sasa Initiative. However, fuel stacking is still common among rural households. Similar models involving peer support could be explored as we move towards attaining SDG 7.

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Track Classification: Renewable Energy: Energy access