

A new initiative to help scale up the adoption of clean energy in sub-Saharan Africa and address the burden of disease from household air pollution has been launched.

The initiative launched in a collaboration led by Kenya Medical Research Institute aims to reduce respiratory and cardiovascular disease from exposure to household air pollution.

The 5-year programme dubbed Clean-Air (Africa) will focus on addressing barriers to the adoption of clean modern fuels for resource-poor households.

The Sh1 billion initiative is funded by the UK National Institute for Health and Care Research under their Global Health Research Programme.

It also had significant benefits for the environment, from reductions in deforestation and pollutants from burning solid fuels.

The NIHR CLEAN-Air (Africa) Unit will involve research partners from Kemri, the University of Liverpool, Moi University, University of Dar es Salaam, Makerere University Lung Institute, Rwanda Biomedical Center and Eagle Research Center and Douala General Hospital.

The unit is co-directed by Dr James Mwitari from Kemri and Professor Daniel Pope and Dr Elisa Puzzolo from the University of Liverpool.

“Clean-Air(Africa) is ‘clean fuel agnostic’ with a focus on the best available options for scaling clean cooking that can improve health whilst achieving environment, gender and climate co-benefits,” Kariuki said.

The project is a flagship initiative of the Energy, Air Pollution and Health Research Group at the University of Liverpool’s Department of Public Health, Policy and Systems.

Despite sustained campaigns to have people switch to clean energy such as LPG, poverty and reluctance to change established habits combined with a lack of information on the impact of such fuels on lung health have continued to hamper the campaign.