

Guatemala and Honduras are among the countries in Latin America and the Caribbean with the highest levels of poverty, with the lowest proportion of the population dependent on clean fuels and technologies, and the highest use of firewood. Available estimates and statistics show that a large part of the population, particularly in rural areas, uses firewood as the main cooking fuel. Although there is progress in terms of electricity coverage, there is an underconsumption of electricity, since the most used energy source at the residential level is firewood.

Around:
20% of Guatemalan and Honduran households use firewood as their main cooking fuel.

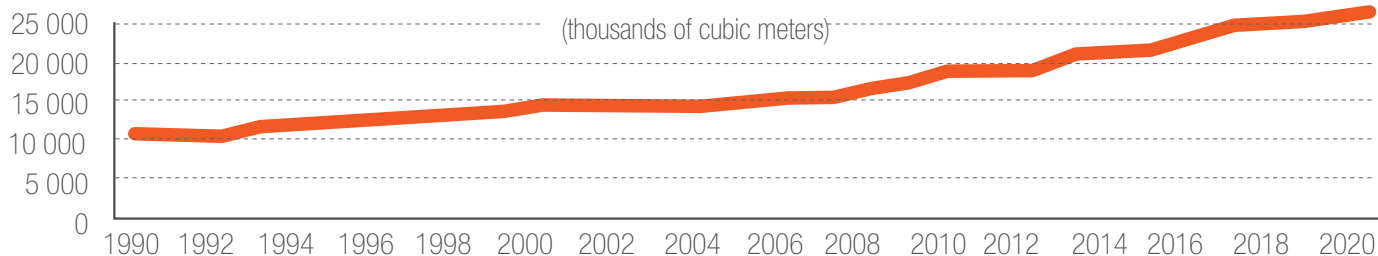
There are structural causes such as the poverty that prevails in a large part of the population in both countries, lack of infrastructure and distribution channels in rural areas and geographically isolated places.



According to the WHO, air pollution caused by open fires and stoves located in poorly ventilated spaces and using wood, charcoal as fuel is responsible for hundreds of thousands of deaths around the world (WHO, 2018).

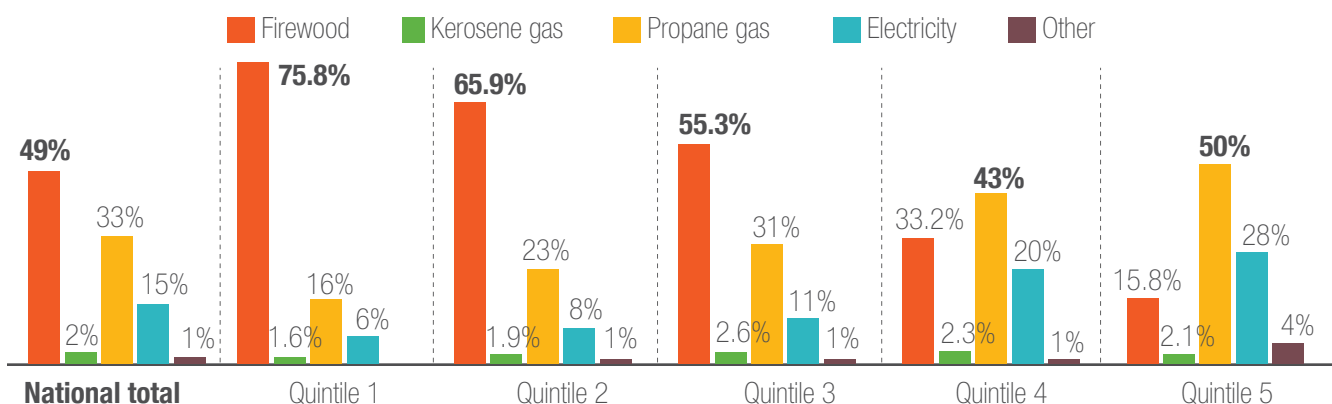
Guatemala

Estimates of household fuelwood consumption¹, 1990-2020



Honduras

Main household cooking fuel, total and by income quintile², 2021



Recommendations

In order to increase the use of clean technologies and fuels, it is suggested that priority be given to electricity generated by non-conventional renewable energy sources and isolated systems, considering that both countries import LP gas, a non-renewable resource. Given that in the short and medium term it is difficult for all households to switch to electricity, LP gas or both, strategies should be promoted to adopt biomass improved stoves and reduce firewood consumption and emissions of particulate pollutants in households.

1: UN Data, 2023. 2: Prepared by the author with information from the EPHPM 2021.