

ISO Cookstove Standards: FAQ and Stakeholder Guidance

❖ What standards have been developed for cookstoves?

Standards can be developed at different levels, but are most common at a national or international level. For cookstoves, there have been a number of standards developed at the national level. In 2014, a committee was formed to develop and approve international standards; initial documents from this committee were published in 2018. A list of cookstove standards are available [here](#).

❖ Who develops international cookstove standards?

International Organization for Standardization (ISO) Technical Committee 285 (TC 285) on Clean Cookstoves and Clean Cooking Solutions is the key body developing and approving international standards. It is comprised of experts nominated by 45 countries and 8 liaison organizations. TC 285's experts are organized in working groups to develop drafts and resolve comments provided by participating countries. Within participating countries, national committees comment on drafts and vote on documents. Experts can participate through working groups, their national committees, or both. External liaison organizations share expertise and coordinate on parallel activities.

❖ What documents specifically is TC 285 developing?

TC 285 is developing multiple documents. Two documents have been approved and published: the standard on harmonized lab protocols and a technical report on vocabulary. A technical report on voluntary performance targets has been approved but not yet published. Several other documents are in earlier stages of the development process, and their status can be tracked on the [ISO website](#).

❖ What standards have been developed for fuels?

The TC 285 Fuels Task Group reviewed existing standards on fuels and identified gaps to inform the efforts of the TC 285 working groups and the sector. The key outcome of the group's work is a centralized database that consolidates fuel standards relevant to cooking. It can be accessed [here](#).

❖ Is implementation of standards developed by TC 285 mandatory?

Documents developed by TC 285 are voluntary. Governments can reference or adopt these documents through legislation and can make standards voluntary or mandatory in their jurisdiction.

❖ Where can I access ISO standards on cookstoves?

ISO standards and technical reports that have been approved and published are available for purchase on the [ISO website](#) or through national standards bodies.

❖ What is included in the standard on harmonized lab protocols?

The standard provides three protocols to test and report the emissions, efficiency, safety, and durability of cookstoves in a lab setting. The Standard Test Sequence is a protocol to measure thermal efficiency, fine particulate matter, carbon monoxide, and optionally black carbon. Additional protocols also outline how to assess safety and durability. It is applicable to stoves used for cooking or water heating in domestic or small-scale enterprise settings. Some provisions are relevant for solar cookstoves. The standard does not cover electric stoves. The full scope of the document is available [here](#).

Guidance for Stakeholders

❖ Governments

The documents developed by TC 285 and published by ISO provide references and guidance on how to measure and report cookstove performance. For these documents to have force, governing bodies must reference or adopt them.

National governments can consider adopting the standard on cookstove lab testing as part of their regulations. As each country's systems and markets operate in different ways, the standards are designed to be adaptable to fit local context. Implementation of the standards will vary as well and can include tax and tariff policies, marketing approval requirements, consumer-facing appliance labels, etc.

By referencing the ISO standard, national policies will build on international best practices and be harmonized with each other, which can facilitate trade.

❖ Donor, Implementers, and Procurers

Donors, implementers, and procurement organizations should consider incorporating the new standards into their policies and programs. These organizations can use cookstove performance as assessed by the new protocol as a criterion for product selection for their programs. In combination with other social and economic factors, testing can be used to help identify what product or products can meet their goals. By using the new standard, these organizations can ensure that they are using the best technical performance evaluation methods available, as well as aligning with the sector.

❖ Regional Testing and Knowledge Centers

Regional Testing and Knowledge Centers (RTKCs) are critical to the adoption of the new harmonized laboratory protocols by the sector. RTKCs will use the protocols to evaluate cookstoves and help other stakeholders understand and use the testing results.

RTKCs should learn how to conduct testing according to the new protocols, and also how each metric relates to design, performance, and impact. RTKCs may also need additional or upgraded equipment in order to adhere to the new protocol requirements.

RTKCs provide technical expertise on testing in their country or region; it is critical that they update to incorporate the new protocols into their suite of services.

❖ Cookstove Manufacturers

Manufacturers should consider having their cookstoves evaluated according to the new protocol. This will provide them with an understanding of how their product can perform, highlight key benefits, as well as understand how they compare to other cookstoves on the market. As governments and other organizations update their policies and programs to reflect the new standard, testing data can help manufacturers access new funding or new markets.