



# CLEAN AIR CATALYST

A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR ACCELERATING CLEAN AIR SOLUTIONS

## A Brief Introduction

### THE PROBLEM

Air pollution is the world's largest environmental health risk,<sup>1</sup> resulting in nearly 7 million premature deaths each year.<sup>2</sup> The death toll from air pollution is greater than that of tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and malaria combined. Air pollution causes and exacerbates heart disease, stroke, lung cancer and acute respiratory infections. It damages ecosystems, causes climate change, reduces agricultural productivity and alters the water cycle. Globally the air pollution crisis is expected to deepen, particularly in rapidly urbanizing low and middle income countries (LMICs). Under "business as usual," the estimated number of deaths from air pollution could increase by more than 50% by 2050.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> World Health Organization. 2018. "9 out of 10 people worldwide breathe polluted air; but more countries are taking action." News release. May 2. <https://www.who.int/news/item/02-05-2018-9-out-of-10-people-worldwide-breathe-polluted-air-but-more-countries-are-taking-action>

<sup>2</sup> GBD 2019 Diseases and Injuries Collaborators. 2020. "Global burden of 369 diseases and injuries in 204 countries and territories, 1990–2019: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2019." *The Lancet* 396 (10258): 1204–1222.

<sup>3</sup> Lelieveld, J., Evans, J.S., Fnais, M., Giannadaki, D. and A. Pozzer. 2015. "The contribution of outdoor air pollution sources to premature mortality on a global scale." *Nature* 525: 367–371.

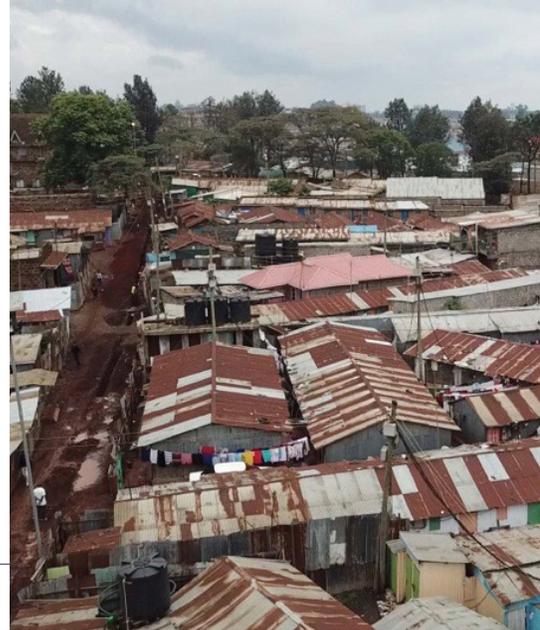
### PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Action to improve – and maintain – clean air has lagged far behind the mounting evidence of harm. Clean Air Catalyst, a flagship program launched by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and a global partnership of organizations led by World Resources Institute (WRI) and Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), seeks to change this.

Through this program, USAID offers a globally applicable approach to developing locally tailored, self-reliant solutions that cut air pollution and improve human health in cities in LMICs. Our partnership brings together diverse local stakeholders to address critical information gaps, to build confidence and trust in air pollution information and to advance and institutionalize lasting solutions.

**Budget:** Up to \$20 Million

**Duration:** 2020-2025



## WHERE WE WORK

We work in 3 pilot cities:



**Indore**  
India



**Jakarta**  
Indonesia



**Nairobi**  
Kenya

\*In Jakarta, Indonesia, the project will be anchored by WRI Indonesia.

## PROGRAM STRATEGY

We use a novel program strategy combining 4 key innovations:

- 1 **Source Awareness:** we combine participatory science, structured media engagement and assessment of public perceptions to build a shared understanding of the pollution sources that affect communities in each city.
- 2 **Root Cause Analysis:** we broaden our search for clean air solutions beyond the “end of the tailpipe/top of the smokestack” regulatory actions by identifying 3-5 activities that drive emissions in the most polluting sector(s) in each pilot region.
- 3 **Inclusive and Integrated Action:** we prioritize reductions of pollutants and pollution sources that disproportionately impact the well-being of vulnerable populations and women, and play a dual role in causing climate change.
- 4 **Strategic Coalition Building:** we select one high-impact intervention from the root cause analysis and build a multi-sector coalition of public, private and community partners to reduce emissions from a key pollution source. Solutions that have the best chance of being implemented and which have clear health, gender and climate benefits will be prioritized.

# SCALING STRATEGY

We develop methodologies to move quickly from data to impact.

Our coalition of leading air quality, environment, public health, energy, governance, and communication experts is working to break down sectoral silos to deliver credible and comprehensive solutions. While the critical sectors and interventions will vary across program sites, we anticipate drawing on the partners' expertise in multiple sectors, including advancing clean energy access, developing alternatives to burning crops, wood and solid waste, and shifting freight and passenger traffic.

Through these pilots, the project will not only generate new, societally relevant scientific findings, but will also create a practical, field-tested playbook for convening collaboration among key stakeholders, identifying and building awareness of air quality priorities, and leveraging USAID missions' strengths to deliver and sustain cleaner air. All outputs will be open source and we encourage other groups to use the data, join the partnership, or otherwise help build a global groundswell of effective and collaborative clean air action.

# PROGRAM PARTNERS

A cooperative led by USAID, World Resources Institute, and Environmental Defense Fund.

## Clean Air Catalyst

A partnership of:



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



WORLD  
RESOURCES  
INSTITUTE



COLUMBIA CLIMATE SCHOOL  
Clean Air Toolbox for Cities



CLIMATE &  
CLEAN AIR  
COALITION  
TO REDUCE SHORT-LEAVED  
CLIMATE POLLUTANTS



Internews



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