Household cooking fuel choice and health effects in Ghana

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According to the International Energy Agency, more than 2 billion people worldwide are unable to access modern and clean fuels such as electricity, LPG and biofuels and thus, resort to biomass. This implies that the choice of cooking fuel by households has serious effects on energy transition. Therefore, we examine the determinants of household choice of cooking fuel and the effect of the household choice of cooking fuels on the health of children under five. Using data drawn from the 2014 Ghana Demographic and Health Survey, we estimate the determinants of cooking fuel by means of an ordered probit model and the health impact of cooking fuel applying the probit model. The results reveal wealth, the age, gender and education of the household head, size of the household and the location of kitchen in the household to influence the choice of cooking. Furthermore, the analysis provides evidence on the negative effect of solid fuel use on health, which implies that the use of solid fuels is a major contributor to the incidence of acute respiratory infections in children under the age of five in households that use solid fuels. We recommend that strategies that are aimed at poverty reduction should be intensified to aid the transition to cleaner and modern fuels and intensify education and awareness of the detrimental effects of traditional fuel use on health of women and children.