

ENERGY AND INCOME INEQUALITY : A CASE STUDY OF
ENERGY USE FOR DOMESTIC COOKING BY URBAN DWELLERS
IN COLOMBO CITY

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Research findings reveal that the predominant types of energy used for cooking by urban dwellers in Colombo city varies across the income range viz, low income groups use more firewood while the middle income groups use Kerosene, electricity and LP gas, and the high income groups use LP gas and electricity. This pattern can be attributed to factors such as the cost of equipment, price of energy, energy efficiency, convenience in the use and cleanliness. The urban poor which depend on purchased firewood which is the most inefficient, most costly and the most inconvenient energy source, spends a greater share of their limited income, on purchasing cooking energy than other income groups. For the benefit of the urban poor, therefore, it is necessary to adopt policy measures aimed at improving the efficiency of firewood stoves, increasing the supply of firewood at reasonable prices and providing low-cost alternative energy sources.