

# FAST FACTS

## United Nations Development Programme



### UNDP and Energy Access for the Poor

*"Expanding access to affordable, clean energy is critical for realizing the MDGs and enabling sustainable development across the globe."*  
– Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

Some 1.4 billion people have no access to electricity and a billion more have access only to unreliable electricity networks. About 3 billion people rely on solid fuels (traditional biomass and coal) to meet their basic needs. Access to modern energy services for cooking and heating, lighting and communications, and mechanical power for productive uses is a vast area of unmet need.

Every year, 2 million people – mostly women and children – die as a result of indoor air pollution from household use of solid fuels, burning dung, wood, crop waste and coal in unventilated kitchens. Furthermore, collecting fuel, pounding grain and hauling water is drudgery that denies poor women and children time for education or paid work.

The energy access situation is particularly acute in the least developed countries and sub-Saharan Africa. The benefits of access are transformational: lights on at schools, functioning health clinics, pumps for water and sanitation, cleaner indoor air, faster food processing and more income-generating opportunities, among others.

#### Energy access is a development priority

Expanding access to modern energy services for the poor is essential for achieving the Millennium Development Goals:

- Reducing poverty and creating jobs by making possible income-generating and entrepreneurial opportunities (MDG 1);
- Empowering women by liberating women and girls from time-consuming tasks, freeing time for education and economic activity (MDGs 2 and 3);
- Improving health conditions by decreasing women and children's drudgery, and eliminating 'kitchen smoke' (MDGs 4, 5 and 6); and
- Promoting clean energy solutions that contribute to low-carbon development (MDG 7).

#### MATTERS OF FACT

- The overall portfolio of UNDP energy-related projects has more than doubled in a decade to some \$2.5 billion, including over 1,500 off-grid energy projects and programmes for the period 2001-2007.
- Annually, 1 million people benefit from UNDP support on energy access. Over 7 million people in 100 developing countries from energy access efforts for the period 2001-2007.
- Investment in energy access corresponds to demand, with most funds directed to Africa (44 percent) and Asia (25 percent).

A new global goal to ensure universal access to modern energy services by 2030 is advocated by the United Nations Secretary-General's Advisory Group on Energy and Climate Change (AGECC). To accelerate achievement of this goal, UNDP is working in collaboration with its partners to increase access to clean, reliable and affordable energy services for poor men and women who are often unreached by conventional ways of delivering energy. Universal access to modern energy services can be achieved by 2030. There are no fundamental technical barriers.

To meet the target of achieving universal access to modern energy services by 2030, additional investment of \$756 billion is required, or \$36 billion per year. This is less than 3 percent of the projected global energy investment. The resulting increase in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of 0.8 percent would be modest.



Photo credit: UNDP Burkina Faso

Women in Burkina Faso operate a multifunctional platform (MFP). Women's annual incomes increased by \$45 and they saved two to four hours per day on domestic chores such as fetching water, grinding and milling after the introduction of MFPs in several West African countries, with UNDP support. Literacy rates also increased.



Photo credit: AEPC/Energy Sector Assistance Programme (ESAP)

In Nepal, a micro hydro power programme supplied electricity to 250,000 people in remote rural communities. The Nepal Rural Energy Development Programme, supported by UNDP, develops capacities of national and local governments and communities to manage energy systems.

## How UNDP is contributing

To meet the energy access challenges of the poor, UNDP supports developing countries in enhancing their capacity in three areas:

- *Strengthening national policy and institutional frameworks*, by integrating energy access within national development strategies, poverty reduction strategies, and low carbon development plans;
- *Mobilizing and expanding financing options*, including through micro-finance, public-private partnerships, and carbon finance;
- *Developing effective approaches for scaling up energy service delivery at the local level*, by strengthening institutional capacity to deliver modern energy services.

UNDP aims to expand energy access for the poor by creating enabling environments and market conditions for diverse solutions such as off-grid options. Such options reach the energy poor beyond the grid while also promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies to mitigate climate change. Examples include micro hydro power, improved cooking stoves, small engines for agro-processing machinery, liquefied petroleum gas (LP gas), and solar photovoltaic (PV) and biogas systems. Efforts include energy access components of climate change mitigation projects.

Programme funding includes UNDP regular resources, the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), GEF Small Grants Programme, governments, and private sector and civil society partners.

In West Africa, a regional policy with ambitious targets was developed by member countries of ECOWAS, the Economic Community of West African States, in collaboration with UNDP. The policy is

mobilizing action to expand access to modern energy services to 36 million more households by 2015.

More than 1,600 multifunctional platforms have been installed in Burkina Faso, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Senegal and Uganda, benefiting some 2.4 million people with access to mechanical power for agro-processing from simple diesel or biodiesel engines.

In Pakistan, 55 poor villages near a forest reserve gained fuel-efficient smokeless stoves with UNDP support, reducing tree-cutting and improving indoor air quality.

Local institutions serving 24 villages near Bangalore, India, are using biogas technology to produce safe and clean cooking gas, generate electricity and pump water for irrigation with UNDP support in a pilot project designed to be replicated.

In Tanzania and in the Dominican Republic, UNDP GEF support for community-led initiatives promoting solar PV technology has helped to shape policy and financing for rural electrification.

## For more information visit:

[www.undp.org/energyandenvironment](http://www.undp.org/energyandenvironment)

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