

# Issue Brief

[www.unfoundation.org](http://www.unfoundation.org) | [info@unfoundation.org](mailto:info@unfoundation.org) | 202.887.9040



## Energy & Climate Change

Energy is essential in today's world: It fuels our cars, provides heat and light, and powers the machinery that drives the global economy. But not everyone has access to modern forms of energy: One out of every five people in the world has no electricity, and two out of five still use wood and other polluting fuels for cooking and heating, causing nearly 2 million deaths a year. Meanwhile, the worsening impacts of climate change – mostly due to the burning of oil, gas, and coal – threaten food and water security for hundreds of millions of people, undermining the most essential foundations of local, national, and global stability.

The United Nations Foundation's Energy and Climate Change program works to speed the world's transition to cleaner energy sources that will not harm the climate. We are proud to support the Secretary-General's initiative on Sustainable Energy for All, which sets ambitious objectives for the world to achieve on energy access, renewable energy, and energy efficiency.

We work with entrepreneurs and groups who are bringing clean energy to people and villages far away from an electricity grid. We work with governments to encourage less wasteful energy use and to increase the production of energy from the wind and sun and other renewable sources. The UN Foundation has become a respected platform for bringing together government officials, business leaders, and policy advocates, working with the United Nations to find agreement and take action toward a better energy future for us all.

The UN Foundation's  
Energy & Climate  
Change program  
works with the UN  
to speed the world's  
transition to a clean  
energy economy.

# Energy & Climate Change

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Our program priorities are:

## Achieving Sustainable Energy for All

Recognizing that sustainable development requires sustainable energy, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has called for the world to achieve three objectives by 2030:

- Ensuring universal access to modern energy services.
- Doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency.
- Doubling the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.

The UN Foundation has helped the UN raise global awareness about this issue and secure commitments to action by governments, businesses, and advocacy groups worldwide toward a sustainable energy future.

## Confronting Climate Change

The UN Foundation works to increase public understanding of the growing threat posed by the use of fossil fuels to the stability of the global climate, on which the world depends to produce food and sustain life. We work with UN agencies and technical experts to promote in-depth understanding of the science of climate change and the ways the world needs to address it. We partnered with former world leaders in the Club of Madrid to promote a “building block” approach to international climate negotiations – one that recognizes the steps many countries are taking to shift to a clean energy economy as both important progress and the basis for a future global agreement.

## Promoting Clean Energy Access

For more than a decade, the UN Foundation has supported UN efforts to demonstrate commercially viable approaches for delivery of clean energy services to those in need. We have enabled local enterprises to deliver clean energy to the rural and urban poor and formed an Energy Access Practitioner Network. We have worked with UN agencies to provide seed financing, credit enhancements, and loan guarantees that small and medium-sized companies need. And we have brought together major institutional investors to recognize the risks of climate change and identify opportunities for clean energy investment.

## Accelerating Energy Efficiency

Energy efficiency – using less energy to do the same amount of work – makes sense both economically and environmentally. The UN Foundation works to promote this neglected energy resource in rich and poor countries alike. Where electric power is scarce, energy efficiency can free up production capacity to make it go further. Where power is abundant, efficiency reduces environmental impacts and consumer costs. Working with the UN, we seek to accelerate the adoption of proven policies, programs, and regulatory reforms that spur efficiency and encourage private investment.

## By the Numbers

- Helped the United Nations secure hundreds of commitments, worth tens of billions of dollars, in support of Sustainable Energy for All
- Raised \$20 million in support of clean energy projects and climate-friendly policy development, reaching more than 300,000 people
- Created the Energy Access Practitioner Network, with more than 500 participants in more than 100 countries delivering energy services where the electricity grid doesn't reach
- Won the endorsement of 71 former world leaders for a framework of action to address climate change
- Set a goal of 25% renewable energy in the United States by 2025, endorsed by Congress, 15 state legislatures, and 900 partner organizations
- Identified potential economic benefits of up to \$9 billion per year of adding wind power to the electricity grid in the U.S. Midwest