

Partnerships for Universal Access to Modern Energy Services

A GLOBAL ASSESSMENT REPORT ON PUBLIC-PRIVATE RENEWABLE ENERGY PARTNERSHIPS

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A Global Assessment Report by United Nations Regional Commissions



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PREFACE

At the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in 2012, Member States recognized the critical role that energy plays in development.

Access to sustainable modern energy services contributes to poverty eradication, saves lives, improves health, and helps to address basic human needs. Rio+20 reaffirmed support for the implementation of sustainable policies and strategies, based on individual and national circumstances, as well as development aspirations.

The UN General Assembly also declared 2014-2024 as the Decade of Sustainable Energy for All, underscoring the importance of energy issues for sustainable development, and in the development agenda beyond 2015. The General Assembly called on Member States to make universal access to sustainable modern energy services a priority, noting that 1.3 billion people are still without electricity and that 2.6 billion people in developing countries still rely on traditional biomass for cooking and heating. Even when energy services are available, millions of poor people are unable to pay for them.

In addition, the UN Secretary-General launched his “Sustainable Energy for All” initiative, to mobilize action from all sectors of society in support of three interlinked objectives to be achieved by 2030: 1) providing universal access to modern energy services; 2) doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency; and 3) doubling the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.

The Secretary-General’s High-level Group on Sustainable Energy for All has already catalysed significant commitments to action by governments, the private sector, and civil society in support of the achievement of these three objectives. Commitments to the initiative announced at Rio+20 include, among others, providing more than 1 billion people with access to modern energy during the lifespan of the initiative, and to forming new public-private partnerships on energy access for the poor.

There is an urgent need to mainstream and scale-up our interventions to make households energy-secure, especially in accordance with specific national conditions. Given the complexity of these challenges, partnerships will play an increasingly significant role. This is why the UN is working to assist Member States in developing policy options for fostering partnerships, particular for energy access in rural communities as part of attaining sustainable energy for all.

With support from the United Nations Development Account, the five regional commissions; Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), Economic Commission for Latin America and Caribbean (ECLAC), Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) are working together to enhance energy security and improve access to energy services through development of public-private renewable energy partnerships. The initiative is led by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), with additional funding from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). We hope Member States across the globe are able to leverage the findings from this unique undertaking.

This report finds that successful partnerships actively promote community empowerment through engagement of community members in leading to a higher level of ownership of community based energy projects. It aims to provide examples of practical experiences and good practices, to demonstrate that public-private renewable energy partnerships can play an effective role for improving energy access to the rural poor and help to create the inclusive, resilient, and sustainable future we want.



Noeleen Heyzer
Under-Secretary General of the United Nations
and Executive Secretary of ESCAP

About The United Nations Regional Commissions

The Regional Commissions are the regional outposts of the United Nations in their respective regions. They are also an integral part of their regional institutional landscape. Stationed in five regions of the world, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLAC), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA) share key objectives aiming to foster economic integration at the subregional and regional levels, to promote the regional implementation of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and to support regional sustainable development by contributing to bridging economic, social and environmental gaps among their member countries and subregions.

To achieve these objectives, the five Regional Commissions promote multilateral dialogue, knowledge sharing and networking at the regional level, and work together to promote intra- regional and inter-regional cooperation, both among themselves and through collaboration with other regional organisations.

The outcome document of the Rio+20 Conference emphasizes the significant role played by the Commissions in promoting a balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and recognizes the need to ensure effective linkages among global, regional, subregional and national processes. More specifically, it entrusts the Regional

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