

2012: The International Year of Sustainable Energy for All



The United Nations General Assembly has declared [2012 the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All](#), recognizing that “...access to modern and affordable energy services in developing countries is essential for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and sustainable development, which would help to reduce poverty and to improve the conditions and standard of living for the majority of the world’s population.”

In response, the Secretary-General is undertaking action to support the Year through a global initiative on Sustainable Energy for All. The initiative will mobilize action from governments, the private sector, and civil society partners globally. The Secretary-General has set three interlinked objectives for his initiative: ensuring universal access to modern energy services, doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency, and doubling the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix. The International Year of Sustainable Energy for All will provide a vital advocacy platform for raising awareness of the challenge.

The [UN General Assembly resolution](#) that designates 2012 as the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All encourages Member States and other actors to increase the

awareness of the importance of addressing energy issues and to promote action at the local, national, regional and international levels. Member States are at the heart of the success of the Year. To develop and promote strategies, commitments and activities related to the preparation and observance of the Year, and assume responsibility for reporting back on national contributions to the objectives of the Year, Member States are encouraged to appoint National Coordinating Mechanisms. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has prepared a guidance note to inform the formation of [National](#)

[Coordinating Mechanisms](#)

that can be a driving and pivotal force in advocating for commitments and accountability towards the goal of sustainable energy for all. For information on your country's activities in the Year's efforts, contact your national United Nations office or the department of public affairs of the agencies responsible for energy in your country. Other resource material regarding the 2012 International Year of Sustainable Energy for All can also be found [here](#)

▣ **Sustainable development is not possible without sustainable energy.**

One person in five on the planet still lacks access to electricity. Twice that number, three billion people, rely on wood, coal, charcoal or animal waste for cooking and heating. In today's economy, this is inequitable— a major barrier to eradicating poverty. In industrialized countries the energy problem is one of waste and pollution, not shortage. Throughout the world, inefficient energy use harms economic productivity and energy-related emissions contribute significantly to the dangerous warming of our planet. Climate change puts us all at risk, but it hurts the poor first - and worst.

The key to both challenges is to provide sustainable energy for all – energy that is accessible, cleaner and more efficient.

Sustainable energy for all is an investment in our collective future.

Feature stories

- Pilar Valladolid's health—and that of her family—has improved since she received a new, energy-efficient cook stove (Photo:Musuk Nolte/UNDP) [Peru: Improving cook stoves and access to energy](#)



[A woman in Lima, Peru, in a kitchen in this city, has a great deal of effort for](#)



[A woman in Skardu, Islamabad, Pakistan, with the World Bank's Development Africa team](#)



[A woman in Botswana, with the World Bank's Development Africa team](#)



[New rice cultivation in Northern Mali](#) as he settles down to watch the evening news on his



[helps her to harvest of corn more easily](#) in a 20 kilowatt solar panel in Burkina Faso, the



[with a battery of this forest](#) in the 5-year-old 12- to 30-year-old mother of three children