



10 May 2007

Synergy on energy: Three organizations strengthen cooperation to empower the poor

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Bank expressed their commitment today to strengthen cooperation on energy access, an important advance in the drive for more efficient and more effective support to poverty reduction and sustainable development.

Discussions took place at a ministerial luncheon (read the related PowerPoint document at the bottom of this page) at the tail end of the two-week Commission on Sustainable Development meetings at UN Headquarters. The cooperation will build on existing partnerships such as the UNDP/UNEP Poverty Environment Facility and the broad collaboration between UNDP and the World Bank on strategies for reducing poverty.

"As our work grows, so does the need for cooperation and harmonization, in order to be effective and relevant," said UNDP Associate Administrator Ad Melkert after speaking at a high-level ministerial session at CSD yesterday morning (<http://content.undp.org/go/newsroom/2007/may/ad-melkert-commission-on-sustainable-development.en?categoryID=349463>). "So, for us, cooperation and harmonization in the area of energy access for the poor are not theoretical; they are real and indeed critical if we are to be delivering results." Melkert stressed the importance of ensuring national ownership and leadership in crafting development strategies, and the need to imbue all support efforts with a strong focus on tangible results in the lives of the poor. In recent years, UNDP's activities to expand access to energy services for the poor have grown substantially, with a particular upsurge in Africa.

"As it becomes increasingly apparent that climate change is the major crisis facing us all, it's also clear that we have to provide clear energy solutions to solve the critical problem of energy access in developing countries, particularly those in Sub Saharan Africa," said UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner. "Closer collaboration between UNDP, UNEP and the World Bank on the transition to a low-carbon energy future will foster more practical support on the ground."

"The financing challenge in the energy sector is truly daunting" added Jamal Saghir, Director of the World Bank's Energy, Transport and Water Group. For the electricity sector alone, developing countries need nearly US \$165 billion annually, of which less than half is currently available. The case for Africa, where many countries have electricity coverage of less than ten percent, is particularly compelling. "Countries, development partners, NGOs, civil society and the private sector have to act in concert to address this challenge or we face the prospect of serious impacts on growth and development," added Saghir, expressing the growing need to pool efforts and resources for the benefit of country partners.

Presenters at the luncheon demonstrated how stronger operational partnerships and coordination on the ground can deliver better results in energy development, and paid special attention to issues of energy access in Africa. Vijay Iyer, Manager of the World Bank's Africa Energy Group, presented several ways to strengthen ongoing collaboration and mentioned several new areas of potential cooperation among the three organizations. "The coming together of these three organizations is one example of

increasing donor collaboration in the energy field," emphasized Iyer. Panelists included Alain Edouard Traore, Vice Chair for CSD-15 representing the African Group; Laurent Sedogo, Minister for Environment and Life, Burkina Faso; Salvador Namburete, Minister of Energy, Mozambique; and Ton Boon von Ochssée, Ambassador for Sustainable Development, The Netherlands.

Access to modern energy services is an essential part of the development equation. It affects all aspects of development--social, economic, and environmental--including livelihoods, access to water, agricultural productivity, health, education, and gender-related issues. None of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) can be met without major improvements in the quality and quantity of energy services in developing countries.

The three organizations will work to flesh out the way forward in greater detail in coming months.

For more information, contact Ben Craft, +1 (212) 906-5344, or benjamin.craft@undp.org.

[Related files](#)

Slides for the 11 May luncheon Final.ppt -

Delivering Coordinated Action on the Ground to Respond to Energy Challenges - [\[View\]](#)

Link to original Press Release:

<http://content.undp.org/go/newsroom/2007/may/energy-poverty-20070510.en>



10 May 2007

Ad Melkert to the Commission on Sustainable Development

*The 15th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-15)
on the Thematic Cluster of Energy for Sustainable Development, Industrial Development,
Air/Atmosphere Pollution and Climate Change*

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Despite the abundance of energy resources available to us, access to energy remains as elusive as ever before. At present, there are nearly 2 billion people without access to modern energy services – a number which has hardly changed in the past twenty years and is likely to grow if current policy trends continue. This entrenches billions of people in poverty, particularly women.

Reducing our impact on the environment, and in particular the climate, is another important energy challenge. Roughly three quarters of human-originated greenhouse gas emissions are due to the burning of fossil fuels. Climate change is undeniable as is the need to mitigate and adapt to it.

Fortunately, these challenges are not insurmountable. We know, for example, that providing access to basic energy services to the poor is possible to finance and can be delivered with negligible impact on the climate. We also know that with stronger political commitments, we can harness technology and financing to accelerate the transition to a cleaner, more efficient and sustainable energy future.

To realize these possibilities, however, we need to deliver on our promises, in particular our commitment to increase development aid in support of the Millennium Development Goals.

On our part, we at UNDP, supporting UN Resident Coordinators in over 160 countries, are dedicated to helping countries turn their commitments into action while at the same time coordinating and bringing coherence to UN country teams' activities. Let me highlight UNDP's three priorities with regards to energy.

Our first priority is to help countries mainstream the energy needs of the poor in their national development plans and poverty reduction strategies. In doing so we support developing countries' efforts to establish and meet national energy access targets. UNDP will be working toward this end in over 60 countries with support from a wide range of partners and partnerships, including the recently established UNDP/UNEP Poverty Environment Facility.

Second, we are supporting developing countries to align their budgets and development assistance to the energy needs of the poor, as well as to mobilise financing to transition to cleaner energy systems using resources such as the Global Environment Facility but also those beyond ODA. To this end, UNDP is expanding the operation of our MDG Carbon Facility to help catalyse carbon financing, particularly in least developed countries.

Thirdly, to translate resources into results, developing countries need to intensify their efforts to strengthen the local institutional capacity to scale up energy service delivery for the poor. Our work is especially growing in Africa where we help the Economic Commission of West African States and the East African Community develop national and regional capacities to implement their ambitious policies for providing access to energy services to over 200 million rural poor. UNDP is in the process of establishing an Energy Access Capacity Development Facility to provide such needed support, particularly in LDCs. In doing so, we leverage the experiences and best practices of numerous partners, including the GEF Small Grants Programme, which has over 1,000 community level energy projects in over 90 developing countries.

Furthermore, we are committed to strengthening cooperation with the World Bank to develop joint actions and deliver more coordinated results on the ground, particularly in the area of energy access in Africa.

At the mid-point of the MDGs - seven and a half years from the start and seven and a half years to go to 2015 - it is imperative that we all take concrete steps to fight poverty and promote sustainable development. Let me repeat the suggestion on the future agenda of the CSD I put forth this morning in the closed ministerial session: Let us map each and every developing country situation in terms of: (i) access to energy targets for the poor; (ii) institutional capacity requirements and gaps; and (iii) access to - or the lack of- financing mechanisms. We have to translate general concerns into tangible action. UNDP stands ready to support you in this endeavour.

Thank you.