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UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

SEALING AN **EQUITABLE** DEAL IN COPENHAGEN AND
BEYOND BY **INTEGRATING**
POVERTY REDUCTION EFFORTS
WITH **CLIMATE CHANGE GOALS**



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SEALING AN **EQUITABLE** DEAL IN COPENHAGEN AND BEYOND BY INTEGRATING POVERTY REDUCTION EFFORTS WITH CLIMATE CHANGE GOALS

If we don't put our global fight to eradicate poverty at the heart of any international climate change agreement, we are effectively leaving the world's poor to "sink or swim" by themselves as Archbishop Desmond Tutu has said. The international community has a collective responsibility to ensure that this does not happen.

—Helen Clark, Administrator, United Nations Development Programme

We stand collectively at an important crossroads in our planet's future. Indications are that climate change is taking place faster than previously projected. Climate change has the real potential to undermine development progress in different parts of the globe. For this reason, fighting poverty and protecting our planet must go hand-in-hand—and the new climate change deal must also be a deal for **development**.

Climate change will hit the poorest and most vulnerable first and hardest. The poorest people—those least equipped to cope with natural disasters—are most likely to suffer the most severe impacts of climate change. A person living in a developing country is 79 times more likely to suffer from a climate-related disaster than someone living in a developed country. Research indicates that climate shocks worsen existing gender inequalities and the effects of climate change will weigh heavily on women and children.

Despite the profound and lasting impacts that climate change will bring to those who have contributed least to the problem, all too often responses to climate change remain far removed, or even completely detached, from poverty reduction efforts. Indeed, the adverse impacts of climate

Potential Impacts of Climate Change on Human Well-Being and Economic Development: Selected Examples

- » Up to 600 million more people in Africa could face malnutrition as agricultural systems break down.
- » An additional 1.8 billion people could face water shortages, especially in Asia.
- » More than 70 million Bangladeshis, 22 million Vietnamese, and 6 million Egyptians could be affected by climate-related flooding.
- » Due to altered rainfall, humidity, and temperature patterns caused by climate change, malaria—which currently claims some 800,000 children’s lives each year—will spread to areas from which it had previously been eliminated, such as the highlands of Kenya and Jamaica.
- » Increased flooding is likely to exacerbate sanitation problems, especially in densely populated urban areas, increasing the threat of waterborne diseases, including cholera.

change can seriously impede progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), aimed principally at reducing extreme poverty.

If vulnerable people and countries are to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change, first and foremost, they must have what they need to lift themselves out of poverty and create a decent life. Without basic access to energy, food, water, and sanitation—as well as institutions that work and give people a say in decisions affecting their lives—poor communities and countries will not be able to cope with the additional burden of a changing climate. Therefore, increased access to sustainable energy services for the world’s poorest countries and communities should be fully integrated into actions to reduce extreme poverty and address global climate change. However daunting the task, the international community must no longer ignore it.

Moreover, poor countries and people need targeted support to adapt to climate change—

from the poor farmer who wants to grow more resilient crops, to the family whose home must be able to withstand increased flooding. There is also an urgent need to support small and medium-sized enterprises to help them harness modern energy sources and services for the benefit of their communities. Innovative, low-cost, low-emission technologies and services—particularly those developed and facilitated by South-South cooperation—can help pave lower-emission routes to accelerated development and fulfill a key role in our collective global energy future.

Clearly, the time to act forcefully is now. A new global climate change deal is urgently needed, but the ‘deal’ needs to be an **equitable** one. It needs to support low-emission routes to growth and energy access, and to support adaptation and the building of greater resilience to climate-related natural disasters. Let us work together to ensure that we do not seal just ‘any deal’ in Copenhagen and beyond, but instead seal an **equitable** deal that is positive for our climate and for poverty reduction and development.

INTEGRATING POVERTY REDUCTION AND CLIMATE CHANGE: **TRANSLATING IDEAS INTO PRACTICAL ACTION**

While climate change presents great challenges, it also offers opportunities to assist the world's poorer countries in creating and sustaining inclusive, low-emission pathways out of poverty. As the leading global organisation in the fight against poverty, on the ground in 166 countries, UNDP is responding on the front line of climate change—where it hits the poorest people the hardest.



PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS. 1



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INFORMED DECISION-MAKING FOR ADDRESSING POVERTY REDUCTION AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change adds new levels of complexity and stress to the already complex, multi-dimensional global challenge of poverty alleviation. The sheer scope and dynamic nature of global climate change makes it difficult for many developing countries—particularly the least developed and most vulnerable countries—to take effective action. But avoiding or postponing responsive action could be more catastrophic in the longer term. Building resilience and addressing vulnerabilities with poor and marginal communities are critical factors in any climate-change response strategy.

For decision-makers in developing countries, addressing climate change needs and poverty reduction in an integrated manner offers new opportunities and challenges. Recognising the importance of decision-making tools and approaches that can enable developing countries to respond more effectively to context-specific, country-driven climate change concerns and national poverty reduction objectives, UNDP has recently partnered with The Energy Resources Institute (TERI), India, to help TERI develop a novel approach to informed decision-making.

The initiative focuses on advancing progress towards structured decision-making that enables mapping climate-related action with poverty outcomes and analysing the sensitivity of both climate and poverty outcomes to relevant policy and resource allocation choices. Based on the use of a proposed mapping tool (Action Impact Matrix) as well as a Context Template, the initiative aims to link specific action components of a given climate change adaptation and mitigation programme with different poverty dimensions, thus shedding light on climate-change-related policy actions that can also help reduce poverty. The overall objective is to design an integrated climate change and development framework that can contribute to the alignment of climate-change-responsive actions with poverty reduction actions, build capacities amongst developing countries, and promote international cooperation on climate change.

PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS .2



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INNOVATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE TECHNOLOGIES THAT CAN BRIDGE THE DIVIDE BETWEEN POVERTY REDUCTION AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Any future global climate deal needs to focus on concrete mechanisms and frameworks to support energy innovations that directly improve the well-being of poor communities and countries that are most vulnerable to the adverse impacts of global climate change. Focusing on ways and means to enable the research, design, development, and implementation of innovative energy technologies and services that address both climate change needs and the needs of the poor should be a critical element in any future, equitable global climate change deal.

UNDP recognises that increasing and improving access to cost-effective, innovative, and sustainable energy technologies for the poor is critical for addressing both climate change and poverty reduction concerns in many developing countries. With this in mind, UNDP has recently commissioned an expert paper, 'Bridging the Divide between Poverty Reduction and Climate Change through Sustainable, Innovative Energy Technologies', which highlights the urgent need for linking climate change and poverty reduction through increasing access to innovative, cost-effective, and sustainable energy technologies for poor and vulnerable communities and countries. Here, funding for innovative ideas and partnerships, and scaling up collaborative action for new, low-cost, low-emission technologies and services is identified as an effective means to reduce poverty and address climate change concerns.



PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS .3

WIND POWER IN SRI LANKA © PRACTICAL ACTION/ZUL, 2004



Today energy remains the missing MDG.

— *RK Pachauri, Chairman, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*

POVERTY
AND CLIMATE
CHANGE
KNOWLEDGE
NETWORKS

Global climate change presents unprecedented challenges and opportunities for all development stakeholders—including donor agencies, recipient countries and communities, and civil-society actors—as they strive to ‘do development differently’. Embracing this new development paradigm necessitates that climate change considerations are fully integrated with national plans to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); and that national climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies and projects are directly linked with poverty reduction and sustainable development goals. It also requires that investment and development decisions have a consistent climate-change focus built in every step, from project idea to design, implementation, and monitoring.

The role of knowledge networks is crucial in integrating and scaling up action related to poverty reduction and climate change, particularly amongst and within developing countries facing capacity and resource constraints. The compilation and exchange of information and knowledge related to developing-country perspectives on poverty reduction and climate change is a very important step towards ensuring an equitable climate consensus.

In collaboration with the South Center, Geneva, and The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), India, UNDP has been engaged in dialogue with experts from leading southern-based research institutes and centers to foster better understanding of the ways that climate change actions can improve poverty reduction efforts. At a workshop on ‘Linking Poverty and Climate Change’ which took place in Bonn on 13 August 2009, it was decided to establish a network of groups and experts working on climate change and poverty, in order to advance the dialogue on integrating poverty reduction efforts with climate change concerns at all levels. UNDP hopes that all stakeholders will engage in this promising new endeavour.