**Topline Media Messages**

* The world spends an astounding US 423 billion dollars annually to subsidize fossil fuels for consumers –oil, electricity, gas, and coal.
* The amount spent on these subsidies could pay for COVID-19 vaccinations for every person in the world, or pay for three times the annual amount needed to eradicate global extreme poverty.
* UNDP is encouraging reform of fossil fuel subsidies as a crucial step in fighting the climate crisis and moving towards an inclusive, green recovery from COVID-19. The need to address the issue of fossil fuel subsidies is increasingly recognized globally by economists, policymakers and others including the IMF and the World Bank. The United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres has also made a strong call for reform.
* Fossil fuel subsidies are both inefficient and inequitable.
* Addressing fossil fuel subsidies is a politically charged issue, but the facts show that reform is necessary, and when done correctly, supports the poor, creates jobs, and protects the planet.
* We know that every country is different and has different needs and obstacles in the transition to clean energy.
* Moving away from fossil fuel subsidies is a first step towards correctly pricing energy, reflecting the true and full cost of using fossil fuels to society and the environment.
* However, if poorly planned, fossil fuel subsidy reform can lead to price increases that could disproportionately impact the poorest households, thus it could easily become an income- and energy-impoverishing strategy.
* This makes fossil fuels reform difficult and imposes a key barrier to transitioning to clean and renewable energy sources.
* UNDP supports a progressive and gradual response to reforms.
* We know there are examples of countries where successful reforms have been undertaken, including in Ghana, India, Indonesia, Morocco and Zambia.
* UNDP wants to support countries to move away from reliance on fossil fuels. We support a phased approach that is just and equitable and includes income protection and compensation for less advantaged groups.
* Priorities must shift if we want humanity and earth to survive. The world is spending billions of dollars each year on fossil fuel subsidies that are destroying our planet while hundreds of millions of people live in poverty.
* Climate change and inequality are inextricably linked. The rapid acceleration of climate change presents the biggest existential threat to humanity ever known. Just like the COVID-19 pandemic, it affects everyone - but not equally. While nobody will be immune to the increasingly savage effects of our heating planet, it is poor and vulnerable people who will pay the price of inaction.
* The recent IPCC report is a “code red for humanity” in the words of the UN Secretary General. We are facing an inevitable, unprecedented and irreversible global climate crisis.
* The main contributor to the climate emergency is the energy sector that accounts for 73 percent of human-caused greenhouse gas emissions. It is powered by fossil fuels – coal, electricity, oil and gas – which are subsidized with public funds.
* We must dispel the myth that there is a choice between climate and the economy. The aim is to transition away from fossil fuel subsidies in a strategic, just and timely manner.
* UNDP is a key actor to help governments successfully implement energy pricing reforms in an economically viable and socially fair way, due to its extensive on-the-ground presence in 170 countries and territories, as well as its policy experience and expertise,
* The COVID-19 crisis presents an opportunity for governments and policymakers across the globe to act now in order to prevent the catastrophic consequences of climate change.
* The unprecedented COVID-19 recovery and stimulus plans must help us build the green economies of tomorrow and invest in a future where no-one is left behind. Investments must also be aligned with the Paris Agreement and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
* The devastating climate predictions facing the world are not inevitable. Working together, we can still have an immense impact, limit global warming to 1.5 degrees and reduce the number of people susceptible to climate-related poverty risks by as much as several hundred million by 2050.
* Affordable clean energy access for all is the foundation for achieving a global energy transition that is fast and fair. As we saw at the High-Level Dialogue on Energy, the energy revolution is underway, but 759 million people still live without electricity and the opportunities it provides. It is one of the most blatant examples of inequality in our world today.