



# SDG 7: Affordable and clean energy

*Ensure access to affordable, reliable,  
sustainable and modern energy for all*



## FACTS AND FIGURES

- The global electricity access has risen from 87% in 2015 to **91% in 2021**, but **675 million people**, primarily in LDCs and sub-Saharan Africa, **remain without access**.
- In 2021, **71% of the global population** had access to clean cooking fuels and technologies, up from 64% in 2015. The region with **the lowest access rates** was **sub-Saharan Africa**, where progress towards clean cooking has failed to keep pace with growing populations, leaving a total of **0.9 billion people without access in 2021**.
- The share of renewable sources in total final energy consumption increased from 16.7% in 2015 to **19.1% in 2020**, with **the electricity sector** leading the way at 28.2% and driving most of the renewable energy growth, while progress in **the heat and transport sectors** has been limited in the past decade.
- The rate of improvement in primary energy intensity dropped to **0.6% in 2020**. This makes it the worst year for energy intensity improvement since the global financial crisis. **To make up for lost time, energy intensity improvements will need to average 3.4% per year until 2030**.
- International public financial flows for clean energy in developing countries have declined consistently, even before COVID-19. In 2021, they reached **\$10.8 billion**, down by nearly 12% from 2020. This represents **a 35% drop** from the decade-long average of 2010-2019 and less than half of the peak in 2017 at \$26.4 billion.
- In 2021, developing countries achieved a **record-breaking installation of 268 Watts per capita of renewable energy-generating capacity**, growing at a rate of **9.8%**. Progress has been significantly slower for small island developing States, least developed countries and landlocked developing countries.

## 7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



To learn more about global progress on the 17 SDGs, [click here to read the latest Sustainable Development Goals Report 2023](#).



## WHERE WE STAND

- While progress has been made in improving access to electricity and clean cooking fuels globally, **675 million** people remain unconnected to grids and **2.3 billion** continue to rely on unsafe and polluting fuels for cooking.
- Renewable sources power **nearly 30% of energy consumption in the electricity sector**, but challenges remain in heating and transport sectors.
- If the current trend persist, about **660 million** people will still lack access to electricity and **close to 2 billion** people will continue to rely on polluting fuels and technologies for cooking by 2030.

The **Energy Compacts** are the largest global platform for voluntary commitments to accelerate SDG7 action towards universal energy access and just, inclusive energy transitions, in support of both the 2030 Agenda and net-zero emissions.

**More than 180 Energy Compacts, totalling over US\$ 600 billion in financial commitments** by national governments, cities, businesses, international organizations, civil society and youth networks, have been registered, since they were launched in connection with the High-Level Dialogue on Energy convened by the UN Secretary-General in September 2021. They include specific energy transition milestones, coalitions to promote No New Coal and 24/7 Carbon Free Energy, pledges for support and initiatives to advance clean cooking, gender-conscious energy action, wind and solar power and green hydrogen, among many others. Learn more about how to submit Energy Compact [here](#).



### UN SYSTEM IN ACTION

- The **Global Network of Regional Sustainable Energy Centers (GN-SEC)** is an innovative south-south and triangular multi-stakeholder partnership to accelerate the energy and climate transformation in developing countries. It is established by **UNIDO** in partnership with **sub-regional economic communities (RECs)** and their Member States. The gradually expanding partnership comprises a sub-network of centers for the African and the Arab region (in cooperation with the EAC, SADC, ECOWAS and the Arab League) and a sub-network for Small Island Developing States (in cooperation with SIDS DOCK, CARICOM, and SPC). Currently, the network is expanding to Central America, Central Asia and the Himalaya-Hindukush region.
- Recognizing the need to address the interlinkages between water and energy and their contributions to the advancement of other SDGs, **UN DESA and ITAIPU Binacional** (hydroelectric power plant owned by Brazil and Paraguay) formed the **Sustainable Water and Energy Solutions Network** on SDG 6 and SDG 7 interlinkages, with a large number of multi-stakeholders from all regions and constituencies.
- **United for Efficiency (U4E)** is a global effort supporting developing countries and emerging economies to move their markets to energy-efficient appliances and equipment. It works to help countries implement an integrated policy approach to enable a sustainable and cost-effective transformation to energy-efficient lighting, equipment and appliances. It is a public-private partnership led by **UNEP, GEF, UNDP, ICA, CLASP and NRDC** with the support of other international partners.
- Hosted by **UNITAR**, the **Global Platform for Action (GPA) on Sustainable Energy in Displacement Settings** is the global initiative to promote actions to remove barriers to energy access in humanitarian settings by providing a collaborative agenda for energy, development and humanitarian partners to deliver concrete actions of SDG 7.
- With an initial focus on clean cooking and health-care facility electrification, the **Health and Energy Platform of Action (HEPA)** is a platform for strengthening cooperation between health and energy sectors, aiming to catalyse the scale of results required to achieve SDG 3 on health and SDG 7 on energy. Partners include **WHO, UNDP, UN DESA, World Bank**, with strong support of IRENA and key partners.
- Supported by the Governments of Canada, Ecuador, Iceland, Kenya, Nepal and Sweden, **UNIDO, Energia International Network on Gender and Sustainable Energy (ENERGIA) and Global Women's Network for Energy Transition (GWNET)** formed **the Gender and Energy Compact** to catalyze action towards gender equity and women's empowerment to accelerate a just, inclusive and sustainable energy transition.

Special thanks to **UN-Energy** for providing inputs to the factsheets. For more information about the UN system action to implement the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, visit



UN SYSTEM SDG  
IMPLEMENTATION  
DATABASE