



COMBATING ENERGY POVERTY

Energy is an essential prerequisite for economic development. Energy services are indispensable to ensure that basic human needs are met, such as food and shelter. They also contribute to social development by improving education and public health.

THE CHALLENGE

- Nearly **1.6 billion people do not have access to modern energy services** in developing countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. This constitutes a substantial obstacle for human well-being, and is one of the key issues to be tackled in order to successfully achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals.
- To tackle energy poverty it is crucial to focus on building capacity, especially involving local institutions and communities, as well as to stimulate the mobilisation of financing, also by the private sector.
- Grid access and infrastructure in many developing countries are extremely limited, and off-grid energy sources will be an essential tool to ensure progress in alleviating energy poverty, while avoiding technological lock-in in carbon intensive energy sources.

G8 RESPONSE

- The G8 announced the launch of an **Expert-Level working group on Energy Poverty** to define key actions to reduce energy poverty.
- Leaders expressed their strong support for initiatives to **involve rural communities** in electrification programmes, stressing the role of the **private sector** and of capacity building.
- The G8 highlighted the importance of **scaling up renewable, off-grid access** to energy, as a means to strengthen energy availability and put developing countries on the path to low-carbon development.
- The G8 committed to **work with developing countries to build capacity** to support the development, deployment, diffusion and transfer of climate-friendly technologies.