



This year's commemoration of Africa Industrialization Day shines a spotlight on the challenge of "Sustainable Energy for Accelerated Industrial Development".

Approximately 600 million people in Africa still live without access to affordable and sustainable modern energy, and rely mainly on traditional biomass for cooking and heating. This is a major impediment to Africa's social and economic development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Ensuring access to reliable, efficient and affordable energy is a key element in advancing industrial development, creating decent jobs and increasing productive capacity, especially for small and medium enterprises and rural populations. Modern sources of energy will decrease dependence on primary commodities, reduce vulnerability to external shocks, and increase economic resilience.

We need to make access to energy a priority. At the same time, we must ensure that energy solutions do not endanger our environment, climate, and the welfare of future generations.

Next year's crucially important Rio+20 UN Conference on Sustainable Development is a major opportunity to step up international action and investment. Next year also marks the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All.

I recently appointed a High-level Group to help meet three energy objectives by the year 2030: universal access to modern energy services; doubling the rate at which we improve energy efficiency; and doubling the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix. Achieving these goals can help to end energy poverty and catalyze a clean-energy revolution that benefits all humanity.

As we mark Africa Industrialization Day, let us work together to achieve “Sustainable Energy for All” and advance economic development and productivity throughout Africa.

Ban Ki-moon

**Additional resource:**



The *Africa Renewal* information programme, produced by the Africa Section of the United Nations Department of Public Information, provides up-to-date information and analysis of the major economic and development challenges facing Africa today. Among the major items it produces is the renowned magazine, *Africa Renewal* (formerly *Africa Recovery*), which first appeared in 1987. It also produces a range of public information materials, including backgrounders, press releases and feature articles. It works with the media in Africa and beyond to promote the work of the United Nations, Africa and the international community to bring peace and development to Africa.

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