United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Novice Committee Chair: Joshua Galea

Topic 1: Promoting Renewable Energy in Developing Nations Introduction

The access to greater reliable and sustainable energy remains a crucial challenge for emergent or developing nations (United Nations, 2023). The reliance on non-renewable sources, such as coal, oil, and gas, in these nations are due to their lacking capacity to be able to invest into more renewable practices (Bertaglio, n.d.). This reliance, in turn, exacerbates environmental degradation and economic instability. To tackle these issues, the United Nations Development Programme (**UNDP**) stands as the vanguard in advocating, developing, and implementing renewable energy transitions. This committee will explore the major strategies that enhance the accessibility and affordability of renewable energy, which consequently, promotes sustainable development.

Definitions

- **Renewable Energy**: Energy sources from natural sources that can replenish themselves (solar, wind, hydroelectric and geothermal energy) (United Nations, 2024).
- Energy Transition: Process of transitioning from fossil fuel-based energy production to sustainable and renewable energy sources (United Nations, 2024).
- **Green Jobs**: Employment that contributes to preserving or restoring the environment, specifically in the renewable energy sector (International Labour Organisation, 2016).
- **Carbon Footprint**: Total greenhouse gas emissions caused directly or indirectly by human activities (The Nature Conservancy, 2019).

History/Examples

Historically, several developing countries faced challenges in their attempts to transition to renewable energy for a few reasons. Firstly, the nations face financial constraints that have doomed any potential possibilities of transition. Whether it derives from corruption within the government, post colonial impacts, or simply lack of innovation in the field, finances will be one of the largest obstacles to overcome. Next is lack of technical expertise, with limitations on education, quality of life, and funding towards research, there is a major lack of expertise that is needed for growth in these nations. Finally, the infrastructure within these countries limits the ability to build, develop or maintain such renewable energy infrastructure. A prominent example is in Sub-Saharan Africa, where roughly 600 million people live without any access to electricity (United Nations UNSDG, 2024). The reliance on expensive and inefficient diesel generators leads to the cycle of energy poverty in the region. On the other hand, actions taken by nations such as Kenya and Rwanda to build solar-mini grids, has demonstrated that these nations, with the right application and strategies can bridge the gap of energy production and utilizing renewable sources. Currently, there are several companies that have pioneered strategies that pay-as-you go for electricity costs (M-KOPA and OFF-Grid Electric), which lifts the burden of large upfront costs for households to access electricity (M-KOPA Labs Off-Grid R&D Brings Whole New Grid Classifications - Shell Foundation, 2024). Moreover, actions have been taken to expand the infrastructure in this region, for instance, the African Development Bank's Desert to Power initiative has aimed to harness solar energy in the Sahel region to provide electricity to approximately 250 million people (Bank, 2019). In other parts of the world, strides in developing large-scale solar farms such as the Bhadla Solar Park in Rajasthan has not only helped in cutting carbon emissions but has also generated tens of thousands of "green jobs" (Euronews, 2023). These examples illustrate how targeted investments, specifically curated strategies, innovative financing mechanisms, can drive the renewable energy transition in the developing nations.

Current Situation

As of 2024, many developing nations across the globe continue to struggle with balancing energy demand and sustainability. The UNDP, along with UN initiatives such as **Sustainable Energy for All** (SEforALL) and the **Green Climate Fund**, has been actively providing funding and policy support to aid the energy transition. However, due to factors like geopolitical instability, economic downturns, and lack of innovation hinders the progress being made. It is the duty of the committee to develop strategies, focus on specific nations or regions, and implement solutions to make the transition to renewable energy easy, affordable, and possible.



Figure 1: Renewable energy comparison investments in developed and developing countries.

Questions to Consider

- 1. What are the financial mechanisms that can facilitate the adoption of renewable energy in the developing nations across the globe (provide a broader and specific contexts)?
- 2. How can the UNDP develop partnerships between governments and the private sector to ensure sustainable energy projects?
- 3. What role does major G7 countries play in these solutions and strategies?
- 4. What role does technology transfer play in the energy transition?

Topic 2: Building Resilient Economies Post-Natural Disasters Introduction

Natural disasters severely impact developing countries, disrupting its economies, displacing communities that already lack any security, and puts a major strain on national resources. Effective disaster recovery strategies are pivotal for allowing these nations and its people to still stand on their feet. The UNDP plays a crucial role in facilitating international cooperation to support affected nation, developing financial support initiatives, providing aid to communities and major sectors. It is the duty of the committee to understand and provide a policy for post-natural disaster aid and development, as well as building resilient economies to withstand the major impacts of these disasters.

Definitions

- **Disaster Resilience**: The ability of individuals, communities, and systems to anticipate, withstand, and recover from hazardous events (Combaz, 2015).
- Micro-loans: Small-scale financial assistance provided to entrepreneurs and small businesses to aid economic recovery (Brief2, n.d.).
- Early Warning Systems (EWS): Technologies and protocols designed to detect and communicate impending natural disasters, allowing for timely evacuations and preparedness (UNDRR, 2024).

History of the Conflict/Case Study

One of the greatest modern natural disasters to occur was the **2023 Turkey-Syria Earthquake**, which killed over 50,000 people and caused a nationwide infrastructure collapse (Center for Disaster Philanthropy, 2023). The earthquake highlighted the desperate need for international cooperation in disaster response for the long-term economic recovery of the nation, as well as the economic and safety of the people (Center for Disaster Philanthropy, 2023). Without proper strategies and policies in place in these nations, their economy's will collapse, and the impact of these natural disasters will last for generations to come (United Nations, n.d.). Another example of a natural disaster that caused immense impacts in a developing nation is **Hurricane Maria**, which devasted Puerto Rico in 2017, causing an estimated \$90 billion dollars in damages (Scott, 2018). It is essential to implement strategies and policies post natural disaster, such as **disaster relief acts**, which help communities prepare for and recover from disasters. Identifying the major places of destruction, including a RTO and RPO (recovery time and point objectives), listing response procedures, and providing relief to the communities impacted are the major steps in developing and creating an economy that is able to withstand and be resilient in the aftermath of natural disasters.

Current Situation

In 2025, climate change has continued to intensify and impact ecosystems worldwide, along with the intensity of temperature, so does the frequency and severity of natural disasters (Vernick, 2025). Countries such as the Philippines and Bangladesh, who frequently face typhoons and flooding, have implemented new projects, **the Coastal-Climate-Resilient Infrastructure projects** with the UNDP's assistance (*Coastal Climate Resilient Infrastructure Project*, 2019). The **Global Environmental Facility**, the **World Bank disaster relief funds**, and the UNDP's actions and involvement will play a critical role in rebuilding displaced communities as well as developing resilient economies. However, with the

frequency of these disasters increasing, relief from these **committees will be slower**, therefore developing strategies to allow for the impacted nations economies to thrive and survive is of the utmost importance in the UNDP's discussions.

Questions to Consider

- What policies should be implemented to ensure long-term economic stability in disaster-prone regions?
- How can international organizations collaborate to provide timely and efficient disaster relief?
- What role does technological innovation play in improving disaster preparedness and economic resilience?

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