

The Case for Meeting the Millennium Development Goals Through Access to Clean Electricity

Peter Meisen and Irem Akin, Global Energy Network Institute, www.geni.org



Abstract

Access to affordable clean electricity is fundamental to daily life and any level of socio-economic development. Because it is central to all aspects of our lives - lighting, heating, pumping and purification of water, agricultural productivity, refrigeration of food and medicines, sterilization of equipment and many others - **there is an essential correlation between access to electricity and quality of life.**

Surveys and studies in the 1990's confirmed that the threshold for developing countries to achieve sustainable socio-economic growth could be measured in terms of energy consumption. Below 1000 kWh annual per capita consumption of electricity, indicators such as literacy rate remains below 50% and access to potable water below 40%. When per capita consumption reaches 2000 kWh, the same indicators rise to 85 and 90% respectively. The same correlation has also been established with regard to infant mortality and life expectancy.¹ Therefore, access to electricity is clearly a determinant either of poverty or development.

Based on this relationship, we assert that achieving the Millennium Development Goals can be accelerated through the provision of clean electricity and the requisite energy policies because only then will socio-economic sustainable development be secured. **Enabling access to clean electricity makes it possible to achieve the MDGs by meeting the energy needs of poor people and serves as a solution to help the poorest countries break out of the poverty trap. We contend that achieving of the MDGs can be accelerated with increased access to clean energy services.** November, 2008

For complete report: www.geni.org/research/index.shtml#mdgelectricity

¹ Gaillard, Roger M., "Regional Integration of Power Systems: A Tool to Reduce Energy Poverty and to Accelerate Economic Growth," Workshop on Energy Poverty in Africa 9-10th of June 2008 Abuja Nigeria, pp. 2.