

United Nations  Nations Unies

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Dear Potential Partners,

I am writing to invite you to participate in a new **Global Partnership on Minimum Electricity Access (Min-E Access)** being led by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA). This partnership is registered with the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD). CSD Partnerships are voluntary and multi-stakeholder initiatives aimed at advancing the implementation of the sustainable development agenda.

More than one billion people live in isolated rural areas where there is no access to electricity. These communities represent, in many cases, the poorest segment of the population. Extension of national grids, in most countries, is too expensive to cover these rural areas. Nevertheless renewable energy systems, in particular, reliable stand-alone (off-grid) systems at affordable prices have become available only in the last couple of years.

The objective of this particular initiative is to provide a platform to allow accessibility to affordable off-grid renewable energy systems in rural areas for minimum electricity covering basic services. Most of the support required will be directed towards the two major blocks that will ensure the sustainability of this initiative: **capacity building** and **entrepreneurship development** at the local level. It is recognized that the effort represents just the first step towards adequate levels of universal electricity access worldwide. The initiative is unique because it could provide a fast vehicle to “empower” people with the minimum energy necessary to improve their livelihoods through capacity building that accelerates the transfer of knowledge and technologies and promotes entrepreneurship. The availability of “wireless electricity” could promote a revolution similar to the one started with the “wireless phones” that will allow the creation of employment in many rural areas.

UN-DESA is leading this global effort in cooperation with private and public organizations and international donors. We have already registered some 20 organizations as partners. The effort is being initiated with a preliminary phase covering six pilot countries in three developing regions - Africa, Asia and Latin America. As more organizations join the partnership, the initiative will be expanded to reach out more countries and a long-term implementation programme will allow covering most isolated rural areas by 2022 or in about a decade from now.

The partnership will be presented to the world at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro (Rio+20) in June 2012. This effort could represent a significant contribution towards “2012 the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All,” and to the UN-Energy work on improving energy access.

At this point, the Min-E Access Partnership is actively seeking financial, technical and entrepreneurial support for the implementation of this project in developing countries around the world. Organizations working in the field of rural electrification are invited to support this initiative by becoming active partners. We are therefore calling all potential partners, governments, private and public donors, financial organizations, academic institutions and research facilities to express their interest and support by contacting Dr. Ivan Vera, UN-DESA Project Manager, or Prof. Peter Adelman, Lead Expert Consultant for this project, at the following telephone numbers and emails:

Ivan Vera, Ph.D.

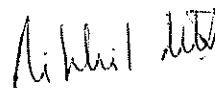
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UN-DESA looks forward to working with you in this exciting partnership initiative. An accelerated implementation of this project in the next several months is expected as many organizations concerned with sustainable development and energy access prepare for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20. Please do not hesitate to contact us for any further information.

With Best regards,



Nikhil Seth
Director

Division for Sustainable Development