



# Developing inclusive markets for sustainable energy



## Who we are

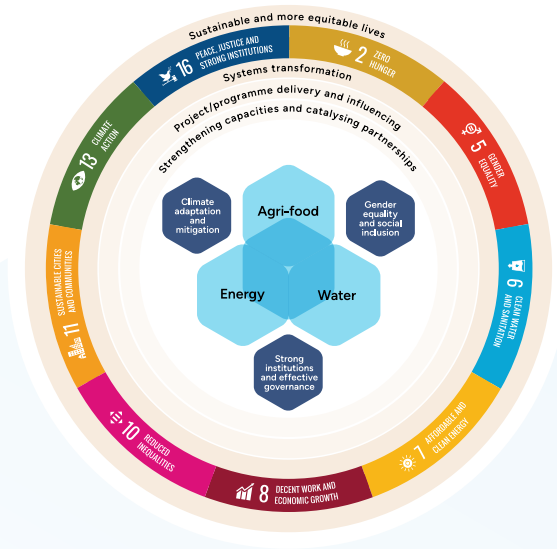
SNV is a global development partner, deeply rooted in the countries where we operate. We are driven by a vision of a better world: a world where across every society all people live with dignity and have equitable opportunities to thrive sustainably.

To make this vision a reality, we need transformations in vital agri-food, energy, and water systems. SNV contributes by strengthening capacities and catalysing partnerships in these sectors. We help strengthen institutions and effective governance, reduce gender inequalities and barriers to social inclusion, and enable adaptation and mitigation to the climate and biodiversity crises.

Building on 60 years of experience, we support our partners with our technical and process expertise and methodological rigour. We do this in more than 20 countries in Africa and Asia with a team of approximately 1,600. By being adaptable and tailoring our approaches to these different contexts, we can contribute to impact at scale, resulting in more equitable lives for all.



# Our vision for impact



Our ambition for the energy sector is to support the development of inclusive markets for sustainable energy. In 2023 alone, SNV contributed to 2.8 million people gaining access to energy. Primarily guided by Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 7, we are working towards ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all by 2030.

## Systems Transformation

Our work in the energy sector contributes directly to the transformation of systems to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience in the face of climate change. We are committed to the achievement of Gender Equality And Social Inclusion (GESI) as a necessary foundation for transforming and achieving equitable energy markets. To ultimately ensure sustainability of interventions and systemic change in the energy sector, ensuring good governance and strong institutions is critical in our work. Alongside these themes, we are focused on deepening partnerships with financial institutions,

governments, and the private sector to expand our impact-driven finance portfolio, to ultimately help make modern sustainable energy products financially affordable. Our increased emphasis on digitalisation will further enable this and we are committed to working with digital innovation as a critical enabler to increasing energy access. We also aim to intensify our collaboration across sectors wherever relevant, to increase our impact. One area in particular is the field of productive use of energy, for example by integrating renewable energy in agri-food value chains, adding value in terms of increased productivity, income and employment



**4 billion people still lack access to clean cooking, while 733 million still live without access to electricity**

## Why a focus on Energy

**Energy is essential for human development. Access to clean energy has been a key element on the global climate and development agenda, and the ambitions of SDG7 are high: to achieve universal access to energy by 2030. And yet today, globally, 2.4 billion people still lack access to clean cooking, while 733 million still live without access to electricity.**

Not only is energy a critical enabler for many SDGs, the energy transition (shifting away from fossil fuels) is also critical for climate change mitigation and adaptation. Use of renewable and efficient energy systems leads to reduced emission of greenhouse gases and increased resilience – hence supporting governments’ climate targets.

Ensuring energy access for all requires significant increases in investments for scaling of off-grid electricity and clean cooking alternatives.

New, innovative financial options will be key to stimulating energy markets – both on the demand and supply sides. We are seeing increasing investments in electrification making use of digitalisation, such as PAYGO solar home systems and remotely metered mini-grids. Such investments are lacking for clean cooking.

We also see great potential for creating employment and enterprise opportunities for young people: with more than 40% of the world’s youth labour force either unemployed or working yet living in poverty, the renewable energy markets create tremendous opportunity for the next generation of skilled workers to deliver on energy access needs. Productive Use of Energy alternatives, contributing to increased incomes and improved livelihood conditions, are natural expansions of the traditional off-grid solar market. Examples are solar-powered shops, kiosks, and workshops, but also applications in the agriculture sector such as irrigation, cooling, drying, and milling, as well as products servicing public institutions.

# How can we contribute

SNV's objective for the energy sector is to support the development of inclusive markets for sustainable energy, contributing to more equitable livelihoods for all. Within this overarching ambition, we identify three specific impact goals.

**We are committed to driving an impactful transition by focusing on three key outcomes:**

1

## Energy access

Contribute to universal access to affordable, reliable, and modern energy services for households, small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and social institutions – through off-grid electrification, clean cooking and heating, biogas and productive use of energy.

2

## Climate change mitigation and adaptation

Increase the renewable energy share and energy efficiency in energy consumption, inclusive of applications in agriculture for improved resilience and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

3

## Economic participation and social inclusion

Build resilient livelihoods and improved incomes for all including young people, women, and disadvantaged groups.

Combining international state-of-the-art expertise with local know-how, SNV offers options for increasing access to clean and efficient energy and productive uses of energy for households in rural areas and humanitarian settings, local businesses, and local institutions through:

- **Solar and other renewable off-grid electricity alternatives** – providing access to energy for production and consumption through a mix of business models and financial mechanisms for stand-alone systems and mini-grids.
- **Clean cooking alternatives** – supporting the shift to a cleaner mix of cooking alternatives including cooking with electricity, (bio)gas and advanced biomass stoves, and improved use of charcoal and firewood where people cannot yet access the cleaner options.
- **Biogas** – reducing carbon emissions, reducing indoor air pollution and related health hazards; improving soil fertility.

# Our approaches



## Sustainable Energy Markets

Through our sustainable energy markets approach, we address key barriers in delivering energy access by integrating different approaches. We raise awareness amongst households, businesses and institutions on renewable energy (RE) and energy efficient (EE) technologies and benefits, increasing the demand for these options. Through context-specific GESI interventions such as gender-sensitive and inclusive trainings we increase inclusivity of these markets and associated policies.

We enhance the supply of energy products and services through trainings and incentives for suppliers, and we support innovation to strengthen supply chains and facilitate access to finance. Through our evidence based advocacy, knowledge sharing, capacity development, and multi-stakeholder platforms – we provide governments with support in the adoption and implementation of a conducive enabling environment for RE and EE.

## Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship

The global youth unemployment rate is estimated at 13.1%, with young people more likely to be unemployed, underemployed, or working in poverty. SNV's cross-sector Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship approach facilitates linkages between the labour market (demand side) and skilled youth (supply side) to stimulate employment and entrepreneurship opportunities.

Our overarching vision is to catalyse positive change at different intervention levels and ultimately contribute to resilient livelihoods for marginalised young women and men. Contributing to SDG8, we provide out-of-school, underprivileged, underemployed, and unemployed young women and men with the tools, skills, and networks that will enable them to identify enterprise development and employability opportunities in our sectors of agri-food, energy, and water. In the energy sector, this has translated into opportunities for young men and women to set up businesses in cleaner cookstoves, biogasifiers, solar PV, and related appliances.

Within and across all three sectors at SNV, we integrate three core themes:

## Gender equality and social inclusion (GESI)

Embedding GESI-responsive programming so that systems, structures, and markets are inclusive – enabling women, girls, men, boys and gender minorities to have equitable access, agency and voice in their lives. Prioritising inclusion as a core practice and outcome, we take an intersectional approach to understand and address persistent inequalities.



## Climate adaptation and mitigation

Addressing climate justice, ensuring that our projects, programmes, and influence strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards, while supporting faster transitions to low carbon development.

## Strong institutions and effective governance

Strengthening institutional capacities to be more accountable, effective, and transparent, and governance systems to be inclusive, responsive, and representative.





Impact  
that matters



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