

675 million people worldwide without electricity: report

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A full 675 million people worldwide still lack access to electricity, mainly in sub-Saharan Africa, according to a report published Tuesday by several international organizations.

Despite significant efforts and some progress, the world continues to face a dramatic energy access gap, according to the [report](#) by the International Energy Agency (IEA), the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), the United Nations Statistics Division, the World Bank and the World Health Organization.

The report cautioned that the world remained off track to ensure clean and affordable energy access for all by 2030—one of the so-called Sustainable Development Goals set by all UN countries in 2015.

The world has seen "a recent slowdown in the global pace of electrification," World Bank vice president for infrastructure Guangzhe Chen said in a joint statement.

While the number of people living without electricity has been cut in half in the past decade, from 1.1 billion in 2010, 675 million people were still doing without in 2021, the report said.

Around 80 percent of them live in sub-Saharan Africa, where the electricity access deficit has remained basically unchanged since 2010, the report said.

It highlighted progress elsewhere though, in particular the increased rate of using renewables in the power sector, but warned this progress was "insufficient" to reach the UN-set targets.

"While the [clean energy](#) transition is moving faster than many think, there is still a great deal of work needed to deliver sustainable, secure and affordable access to modern energy services for the billions of people who live without it," Fatih Birol, IEA executive director, said in the statement.

Citing IRENA data, the report also cautioned that public financial flows

supporting clean energy in poorer countries had been decreasing even before the COVID pandemic hit.

It also found that the current mounting debt levels and rising energy prices were worsening the outlook for meeting the target of ensuring [universal access](#) to clean cooking methods and electricity within the next seven years.

Current projections show that without scaling up efforts further, the world is on track to see 1.9 billion people still living without access to clean cooking methods and 660 million without electricity access in 2030.

That would be bad news for global health.

According to the WHO, 3.2 million people die each year from illness caused by the use of polluting fuels and technologies.

"We must protect the next generation by acting now," WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said in the statement.

"Clean cooking technologies in homes and reliable [electricity](#) in health-care facilities can play a crucial role in protecting the health of our most vulnerable populations."

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