

The Role of Energy In Developing Nations

The role of [energy](#) in modern society is vital. Energy powers our day to day lives. Without energy, we would have to buy our food everyday. We wouldn't be able to access Automatic Teller Machines or online banking. In fact, we would have to resort to cash transactions in order to withdraw money. Furthermore, we wouldn't be able to have hot showers or run our fans or air conditioning units during the summer.

Fernando's story*

The sun cast its final rays across the threshold as Fernando stooped his frame beneath the height of the door and scurried inside. Passing his mother, he gave her a quick peck on the cheek. "Hello, Mama," he said. A drop of odorous sweat oozed off his forehead, dropping onto his mother's face.

Mama squinted, grasped his head in both hands and pulled him towards her. She smells him. "You've been at work at the [dump](#). Did you go to school?"

"Yes, Mama. I went to school," Fernando replied. In his hands, he held out a few coins and offered them to her.

"You have homework? Studies for exams?" she asked, coughing. Mama wiped her dribbly nose on a dirty handkerchief.

"Yes, Mama."

"You better get to it. It's dark. If the power gets cut again, you won't be able to study," Mama looked at the dim, bare globe dangling above the small table in the tiny kitchen.

Fernando hefted his bag onto the table and slid out his maths book. He sat down and opened it. The power went out.

To be continued...

*Fernando's story is a work of fiction, including characters, circumstances, and location.



It is difficult to overstate the role of energy in our daily lives.

Source: [Freepik](#)

What is the role of energy in Developing Nations?

Energy plays a key role in developing nations. In fact, the consumption of [energy per capita](#) is [linked](#) to health, [wealth](#), nutrition, water access, infrastructure, education, and even life expectancy. Indeed, for a nation to move from developing to developed, it needs access to reliable and affordable energy. Furthermore, with the climate crisis demanding our attention, all nations must transition to renewable energy sources to power their futures.

What are Developing Nations?

Before we can understand why the role of energy in developing nations is a significant issue, we need to define whether a nation is developed or developing. Furthermore, we must understand the context and the parameters we are using. Indeed, the parameters matter for many reasons, including [targeted policy and](#)

[aid](#), [resource allocation](#), [economic planning](#), [trade and investment](#), [global cooperation](#), [measuring progress](#), [social justice](#), and [humanitarian aid](#). Developing nations, the majority of which are in the [Global South](#), suffer the most, and deserve assistance to keep up with [globalisation](#). As the United Nations says: “[Leave no one behind](#).”

Developing nations are nations in the process of developing. When defining whether a nation is [developing](#) or not, there are several criteria. It is crucial to take into account income, economic and social structure, physical quality of life, and freedom as factors when measuring development. In fact, this multitude of factors means that sometimes we may consider the same nation developed in certain areas but developing in others.

Measures of Development

Per-capita Income

When defining developing nations based on income, we consider two different forms of [per-capita](#) income. Per-capita income represents the average earnings for each person within a given nation or geographic region.

The first method calculates a country’s average income in its own currency by dividing its total income or output by its population. Then, it converts this number into a global currency using the current exchange rate, which helps compare countries at similar development levels, and gives a basic idea of the differences in wealth between rich and poor countries. However, this doesn’t inform on the standard of living in the nation.

The second method tries to measure how much money people can buy with their local earnings using a common standard of purchasing power. This method, known as [Purchasing Power Parity](#) (PPP), makes it easier to compare the living standards of people in different countries by converting the prices of common items into a standardized value, regardless of their local costs.

Economic and Social Structure

Defining whether or not a nation is developing by its economic and social structure is a little trickier. A developing nation will experience lower incomes and income inequality, reliance on traditional industries, and limited access to

services like education and healthcare. Furthermore, issues like political stability, governance, technology, and gender roles also impact their development. Overall, these factors shape what it means to be a developing nation and the challenges they encounter.

Physical Quality of Life

An early attempt to assess countries based solely on the well-being of their population, called the [Physical Quality of Life Index](#) (PQLI), ranked countries using three factors: life expectancy at age 1, infant mortality, and literacy. Notably, this index didn't directly consider income levels. Though there was a loose connection between income and PQLI performance, significant disparities existed. In fact, some high-income nations had lower PQLI rankings than the poorest countries. Conversely, some very low-income countries had PQLI levels similar to many upper-middle-income nations.

Freedom

Economic Freedom

[Economic freedom](#) has four main facets:

- Personal choice
- Voluntary trading in markets
- The freedom to enter markets and compete
- The protection of people and their property from harm by others

Indeed, [economic freedom](#) means that when individuals acquire property fairly and without harming others, they can use, trade, or share it freely. Furthermore, they can also make choices, engage in trade, work with others, and compete as they wish.

Political Freedom

[Political freedom](#) refers to a society that is free from government oppression or coercion. Among the key pillars of this are the right to express opinions, participate in fair elections, and have civil rights including privacy and a just legal system. In fact, [political freedom](#) is a fundamental human right and an essential part of any democracy, letting people have a say in how they are governed, and live where their rights are respected.



The disparity between developing nations and developed nations can be vast.

Source: [Vecstock](#)

Why Is the Role of Energy in Developing Nations A Significant Issue?

The role of energy in developing nations is significant, as these nations often have the least access to clean and affordable energy. Good [health](#) is crucial for individuals to reach their full potential, and energy plays a vital role in supporting life-saving medical devices, diagnostics, and health technologies. Similarly, [education](#) is indispensable for personal growth, creating opportunities, advancing societies, and energy plays a vital role in well-functioning systems of education. Furthermore, energy is the foundation of [infrastructure](#) and is also essential for [water](#) treatment, distribution, and pumping, ensuring accessibility. Furthermore, energy is indispensable for [food](#) processing, preservation, cooking, and distribution, securing access to nutrition. In fact, without reliable, affordable, and clean [energy](#) sources, people in developing nations face enormous [obstacles](#) to progress. As a result, meeting their [energy](#) needs would not only contribute to increased [wealth](#), but also lead to improved [life expectancy](#), improving their overall [quality of life](#).

moving forward

Fernando's story

...continuing:

Mama hugged Fernando, huge grins wreathing both faces. "Congratulations, son. I'm so proud of you. You studied and worked hard for this." Mama adjusted her glasses and held up his graduation certificate. She didn't need to squint any longer.

"Yes, Mama. When the government changed to renewable energy, the power didn't go out, and I was able to study and pass all my exams," he replied. "Now, I can get a good job at a decent company. When I've saved up enough money, we can move to a bigger house. I love you, Mama."

"I love you, Fernando."

achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and how they link to The Role of Energy In Developing Nations

[The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future.

[United Nations](#)

The role of energy in developing nations has a part to play in addressing every single one of the United Nations SDGs. Transitioning to [renewable](#) energy, whether it is [solar](#), [wind](#), [biogas](#), [nuclear](#), or even [tidal](#), is crucial to offering the citizens of developing nations opportunities to reach their potential and enjoy thriving. Furthermore, this shift will drive up [job opportunities](#) for them, [reduce emissions](#) and [mitigate climate change](#).

A Thrivable Framework

Safeguarding human well-being in all domains is paramount to [THRIVE](#)'s mission. This means advocating for, researching, and educating all who stumble across us on the role of energy in developing nations. It is important for us to be aware of this subject because we can all play a role, even at an individual level, in demanding change from those with power and wealth, for those who do not enjoy the same privileges as many of us.

For people in developing nations to experience [thrivability](#), access to reliable, affordable, clean sources of energy is essential. Without an energy source they can depend on, people in developing nations will continue to struggle with health, wealth, access to clean water and sanitation, education, job opportunities, and many other small things that people in developed nations may take for granted.

[THRIVE](#)'s logo, a ciambella chart, outlines two important boundaries for humanity to adhere to. These boundaries are – a social floor, denoting the minimum for an entity's survival; and an environmental ceiling, where too many resources are taken from the planet. In fact, transitioning to renewables in developing nations aims to keep the citizens above the social floor by meeting health, wealth, educational, and other needs, and beneath the environmental ceiling by reducing emissions.

To further discover [THRIVE](#)'s well-researched treasures, educate yourself on our [environmental stance](#), and familiarise yourself with our [Systemic Holistic Model](#). Please also consider consuming additional [blog](#) content, subscribing to our YouTube [channel](#), listening to our [podcasts](#), attending one of our amazing [webinars](#), or simply signing up for our [newsletter](#).