



Journalism competition winners highlight benefits of sustainable energy for world's poorest countries

Press Release

2 May 2018, Lisbon - Winning journalists from the [Voices of a Brighter Future](#) journalism competition have arrived in Lisbon to highlight the importance of sustainable energy in their communities. The competition, held by the UN Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, called on journalists from the world's 47 least developed countries to submit stories about how sustainable energy is affecting communities and individuals in their countries.

Over 50 entries were received from around the world. The winning entries, selected by a [high-level panel](#) are: [Kossi Elom Balao](#) from Togo, [James Chavula](#) from Malawi, [Sèna Libla](#) from Benin, [Safia Mahdi](#) from Yemen, [Milo Milfort](#) from Haiti, [Moussa Ngom](#) from Senegal, [Abu Siddique](#) from Bangladesh. A number of honorable mentions were highlighted including [Florida Zossoungbo](#) from Benin.

Several of the journalists have arrived in Lisbon to attend the [Sustainable Energy for All Forum](#), which will be held 2-3 May 2018. The event will bring together over 180 speakers from 100 different countries with a focus on leaving no one behind in the global efforts to achieve sustainable energy.

"I am delighted to be in Lisbon as I believe that sustainable energy is Togo's only hope to solve its energy crisis. Togo sees sustainable energy as a solution that does not cost too much and does not pose a threat to the environment. By reporting on such issues, media can help many developing countries to embrace change, to innovate and to invest in renewable energy for sustainable development," said Mr. Kossi Elom Balao, one of the winning journalists working with AfricaWeb.

The winning stories, available in a [digital magazine](#), highlight inspiring innovation, entrepreneurship and perseverance, often in the face of significant challenges. From improved cook-stoves to solar lighting, the competition demonstrates the positive impacts of sustainable energy on the daily lives of women, men and youth. The entries also reveal the very real challenges that still lie ahead with sustainable energy access.

'I wish to warmly congratulate all the journalists who have submitted inspiring stories to this competition. UN-OHRLLS is committed to supporting journalists from vulnerable countries and to showcasing the positive impact that sustainable energy has across the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals," said Heidi Schroderus-Fox, Director, UN-OHRLLS

More than half of the world's one billion people who live without electricity are in least developed countries. While the average global electrification rate reached 87.4 per cent in 2016, the average access to electricity across least developed countries hovered as low as 44.8 per cent.

UN-OHRLLS actively advocates for an improved and enhanced policy focus on sustainable energy with government officials and brokers partnerships between least developed countries, development partners and the private sector.

Further information:

- [Voices of a Brighter Future competition](#)
- [UN-OHRLLS](#)
- Report: [Promoting investment in energy for least developed countries](#)
- [SEforALL Forum, Lisbon](#)

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