



## **Improving Energy Efficiency Participation: The critical importance of sustainable energy for children and future generations**

Climate change is a reality, and evidence shows that its direct and indirect impacts are already causing widespread devastation and human suffering around the globe. The people in the developing countries are disproportionately affected and children are recognized as particularly vulnerable. The key dominant factor responsible for climate change is greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from human activity. Energy related carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) is the most important greenhouse gas, responsible for about 63% of the emissions: increasing amounts of fossil fuels such as oil, gas, and coal have been burnt over the course of the last centuries in order to generate electricity, power machines, facilitate transport of goods and people, and heat and cool buildings. The latest research forecasts that the world's energy demand will further increase by one third between 2011 and 2035 (European Commission, 2014; IEA, 2013). Climate change issues are hence intrinsically tied to the energy sector.

At the same time, energy services are essential for the vast majority of human activity. Energy is considered a basic need in modern industrialized societies. It plays a crucial role in fulfilling most other human needs, be it through heating, cooling, refrigeration, and basic electricity needs. In India, the percentage of households with access to electricity has increased from 55% in 2001 to more than 80% in 2017. Simultaneously, the percentage of energy wastage is also on the rise.

Energy waste isn't just about having inefficient light bulbs or setting the air conditioner too high - it's about faulty insulation, appliances that draw power even when it's not needed, and dozens of other little issues that might be small on their own, but add up to tremendous energy loss over time.

Government of India has taken many initiatives toward improving the electricity grid and promoting energy efficient practices. However, individual participation for optimal use of energy use is lacking.

We must also ensure the next generation understands the importance of protecting our natural resources, which we have come to see as a commodity, and are equipped to deal with the issues they will inherit. By educating young children on the importance of energy conservation, the next generation would be more environmentally conscious. Thereby, it becomes more important to ensure quality education and prepare the next generation to be the guardians of this vital resource in years to come.



On the other hand, education on sustainability ensures increase in the awareness levels with students from all walks of life thinking about and envisaging the environment and its protection as an integral part of the educational process.

This ushers to draw all the perspectives, those of – energy providers, policy makers and the end users, and collectively discuss the associated key issues and potential solutions. This discussion aims to embrace energy efficient and low-carbon development pathways that benefit and address the sustainable energy needs of all. The thematic track at WSDS shall also focus on the way forward to create a mass movement by the students for energy efficiency and increased adoption of sustainable energy.

### **About Energy Wise Energy Rise**

Energy Wise Energy Rise is an Energy & Resource Conservation initiative that focuses on bringing about a first-hand realization of the energy crisis and scarcity of natural resources in the country.

With the increasing demand for energy, effective management and conservation of the same has become the need of the hour. Recognizing the immense value that schools and school children can bring to the initiative and taking due consideration of this urgent need, TERI and BRPL started the campaign "Energy Wise Energy Rise", to propagate efficient usage of energy and to educate the society on energy crisis and pollution issues in March 2018. Simple energy saving and resource conserving tips have been repeatedly advocated, making a considerable difference in protecting the planet and avoiding a state of being power less and fuel scarce.

Energy Wise Energy Rise highlights the strong linkages between energy, climate change, and human well-being. The objectives of Energy Wise Energy Rise are – to ensure universal access to modern energy services, increase in energy efficiency, improve in environment and human health, and increase the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.