**Frequently Asked Questions for Media**

**What is the aim of UNDP’s climate and inequality campaign?**

The campaign is intended to raise awareness around the issue of fossil fuel subsidies and encourage people to take action: what fossil fuel subsidies are; how they negatively affect people and the environment; and how they could be redirected to promote sustainable, equitable development, protect the planet, help tackle climate change and support a transition to renewable energy. At the same time UNDP will be working with policy makers to find paths towards a green and just transition.

**Why call for moving away from fossil fuel subsidies now?**

The climate crisis is an acute and critical issue that requires global action on an unprecedented scale. Time is running out. Significant progress on the transition to clean and renewable energy has been made – it is no longer a question of if this transition should take place – it is now a question of how, and how quickly. Addressing fossil fuel subsidies in a way that is fair and equitable is a critical element of that transition, as recognized by economists and policymakers globally, as well as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres.

**What are fossil fuels?**

Fossil fuels are found in the earth’s crust and are made of the remains of plants and animals. Oil, coal and gas are all examples of fossil fuels.

**Why do you include electricity as a fossil fuel?**

Electricity is generated with fossil fuels (coal, natural gas and oil). The amounts of Fossil Fuel Subsidies that go to electricity that are included in our analysis correspond to electricity generated in this way. Electricity generated with clean energies is relatively small and not included in the analysis .

**What is a fossil fuel subsidy?**

A fossil fuel subsidy is any government action that lowers the cost of fossil fuel energy production, raises the price received by energy producers, or lowers the price paid by energy consumers. It is an incentive to use more fossil fuels. It also skews the economy towards fossil fuels and away from renewables.  It is in essence a negative carbon tax.

**What is the contribution of the energy sector to climate change?**

The energy sector, powered by fossil fuels (coal, oil, electricity that is generated by burning other fossil fuels, and gas) accounts for 73% of human-caused greenhouse gas emissions.

**How does the use of fossil fuels damage the planet?**

The burning of fossil fuels, to release the energy it contains, produces large amounts of greenhouse gases (mostly carbon dioxide, with some carbon monoxide). It also creates air pollution in the form of NOx and SOx compounds, affecting the air quality, in particular in urban environments. The mining and extraction of fossil fuels creates often serious negative environmental impacts (like pollution, spills, water (both surface and groundwater) pollution, fugitive emissions (leakage of methane, a powerful greenhouse gas) and destruction of natural habitats.

**How are fossil fuels subsidies paid/used?**

They are typically paid for from the public budget, so on public revenue raised through taxes or otherwise. Subsidies can take many forms and can include tax breaks, direct financial transfers, artificially setting a lower price than the market price (in which case it would essentially be a form of foregone income). They can be paid at various stages of the fossil fuel cycle: at production, at consumption or at any stage in between.

**What is the cost of fossil fuels subsidies worldwide?**

There are several ways of calculating the cost of fossil fuels subsidies. Using the most conservative, direct cost of subsidies (based e.g. on the difference between international reference market price and actual price) the estimates are in the range of US $423 billion per year globally. This [table from IEA](https://www.iea.org/topics/energy-subsidies) shows the value of fossil-fuel subsidies by fuel in the top 25 countries, 2020. However, using a more expansive definition, internalizing the full external cost of their use (including e.g. health-related costs, the environmental cost, etc.) these estimates are ten times higher.

**What is the alternative use for the money?**

UNDP believes that using the fiscal space that would be created by the removal of fossil fuel subsidies can and should be used to increase social protection. For example, funds saved from fossil fuel subsidies can be invested in a universal basic income schemes for the poorest and most disenfranchised. Another example could be to invest in green jobs. There is not one “silver bullet” but rather a variety of solutions that given the specific national context, may increase a country’s ability and willingness to move towards a just green transition.

**What about developing countries that use fossil fuel subsidies as form of social protection?**

This is indeed often claimed as the main reason for having these subsidies in place – that subsidies are needed to make fossil fuels (or services derived from the use of fossil fuels, like public transport) more affordable for lower income populations. However, they are often poorly targeted, benefiting those who don’t really need them. Part of the fiscal space generated by removing them should be made available to better target and protect those most affected and vulnerable and least able to bear the brunt of price increases. Getting it right on fossil fuel subsidy reform, especially in developed countries, will also be helpful in addressing  global commitments that such countries have made including the US $100 billion per year commitment from public and private sources for adaptation and mitigation in developing countries that has yet to be met.

**•** **What is endtheexcuse.undp.org?**

Endtheexcuse.undp.org is UNDP campaign’s digital ecosystem and hub. It was developed through an in-depth audience segmentation exercise which categorised those UNDP is trying to reach. The aim is to avoid creating a platform which speaks to those who are already activists, but rather focus on reaching the many millions who have limited knowledge and understanding of the matter. Each activation is targeted to reach specific demographics and designed in a format that each group will find engaging.

**•** **What is Mindpool?**

Offering a deeper level of engagement, Mindpool will help us advance collective intelligence on the key  issues by pooling the minds of people all over the globe. With advanced algorithm technology and a large and diverse group of global collaborators, UNDP can mobilize large amounts of data and countless innovations to help tackle the world’s most complex challenges. UNDP can use this data to affect change on a regional national level and inform key stakeholders and policy makers on possible viable path towards a green just transition.

**What is the Digital Futures platform project?**

The Digital Futuresplatform is a data visualization tool that allows the audience to eliminate fossil fuel subsidies in their country of choice, redistribute those funds and see what the possible outcome might be.

**In how many countries  will  the campaign launched?**

Fossil fuel subsidies is a global issue and as such the campaign is global. To tackle climate change we need all countries to take action. The campaign will be launched in as many countries as possible, with each using their own localized messaging and assets.

**Who produced the film?**

The film was produced by Framestore, who are one of the best VFX production houses in the world. Framestore have won multiple awards for VFX including four Oscars. The musical score for the film was composed by Rachel Portman.

**In what languages is the film available?**

The three main languages of the campaign are French, Spanish and English. Other languages for specific markets include, Japanese, German, Danish. More languages may be added in the future.

**Who voices the dinosaur?**

In English, the dinosaur is voiced by American actor, comedian, singer, and songwriter Jack Black.

In French, the dinosaur is voiced by Senegal-born French actor Aïssa Maïga.

In Spanish, the dinosaur is voiced by Mexican actor Eiza Gonzales.