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The quality of life of individuals and societies is affected by energy choices.



7.1 Economic security is impacted by energy choices. Individuals and society continually make energy choices that have economic consequences. These consequences come in the form of monetary cost in general and in the form of price fluctuation and instability specifically.

7.2 National security is impacted by energy choices. The security of a nation is dependent, in part, on the sources of that nation's energy supplies. For example, a nation that has diverse sources of energy that come mostly from within its borders is more secure than a nation largely dependent on foreign energy supplies.

7.3 Environmental quality is impacted by energy choices. Energy choices made by humans have environmental consequences. The quality of life of humans and other organisms on Earth can be significantly affected by these consequences.

7.4 Increasing demand for and limited supplies of fossil fuels affects quality of life. Fossil fuels provide the vast majority of the world's energy. Fossil fuel supplies are limited. If society has not transitioned to sources of energy that are renewable before depleting Earth's fossil fuel supplies, it will find itself in a situation where energy demand far exceeds energy supply. This situation will have many social and economic consequences.

7.5 Access to energy resources affects quality of life. Access to energy resources, or lack thereof, affects human health, access to education, socioeconomic status, gender equality, global partnerships, and the environment.

7.6 Some populations are more vulnerable to impacts of energy choices than others. Energy decisions have economic, social, and environmental consequences. Poor, marginalized, or underdeveloped populations can most benefit from positive consequences and are the most susceptible to negative consequences.

Billions of people in developing countries rely on traditional cookstoves or open fires as thermal energy sources for cooking food and heating their homes. Women and girls bear most of the burden for cooking and fuel collection. They are therefore disproportionately affected by negative impacts. Improvements in cookstove and fuel technology benefit the health and welfare of people using cookstoves and reduce impacts on the environment.

At left - Three women in Darfur using a new cookstove design which optimizes fuel-efficiency and reduces harmful emissions.

(Photo courtesy of Potential Energy.)

At right - A built-in-place cookstove in Bangladesh which is more efficient than a traditional cookstove and reduces the smoke exposure to the family.

(Photo courtesy of the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves.)

