

SDG7 TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP URGES ENERGY POLICIES AND ACTIONS THAT SUPPORT BROADER SUSTAINABILITY GOALS TO MAXIMIZE IMPACT ACROSS MULTIPLE GLOBAL CRISES

An advisory group of energy experts is calling for governments and decision-makers to prioritize their energy policies in ways that address the interlinked global challenges reflected across the Sustainable Development Goals, to maximize impact. This work on "energy interlinkages", the group notes, is particularly relevant at a time when the world faces a growing climate emergency and continuing impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as a triple crisis of energy, food, and finance arising from the conflict in Ukraine. The advisory group is also calling for better data and identifying potential indicators to measure and assess the benefits of such policy actions that aim to generate multiple benefits across sectors. Analysis of regional energy trends and priorities is included as well.

On 1 June 2022, the Technical Advisory Group for Sustainable Development Goal 7 (SDG7 TAG) released this year's edition of the *SDG7 Policy Briefs*, to provide recommendations for how to achieve clean, affordable energy for all, recognizing that tackling the interlinked crises under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change will require massive investment in clean energy.

In his presentation, **Hans Olav Ibrekk, Special Envoy for Climate and Security, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Co-facilitator of the SDG7 TAG**, stressed that efforts towards universal energy access should be dramatically scaled up. While there are positive trends showcasing renewable energy developments on the rise throughout the pandemic, especially in the electricity sector, progress in the heat and transport sectors continues to be slow. This slow progress is also true of energy efficiency, which saw the second lowest rate in improvements since the global financial crisis.

"The most worrying part -- since this underpins our efforts -- is that we see declining investment levels for the second year in row: only about US\$11 billion invested in clean energy in developing countries. Of particular concern is the low level of investment in the least developed countries and small island developing states."

- Hans Olav Ibrekk, Special Envoy for Climate and Security, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Co-facilitator of the a SDG7 Technical Working Group.



"The 2022 Policy Briefs showcase how SDG7 is an enabler for other development goals, and thus decisive action on sustainable energy will yield multiple benefits and catalyze progress towards all the other SDGs, as well as global climate targets. However, the interlinkages between SDG7 and other SDGs need to be quantified and tracked to strengthen the foundation for evidence-based decision-making."

- Sheila Oparaocha, Executive Director, ENERGIA International Network on Gender and Sustainable Energy and Co-facilitator of the SDG7 of the Technical Working Group



To maximize impact and scale up energy action, **Sheila Oparaocha, Executive Director, ENERGIA International Network on Gender and Sustainable Energy and Co-facilitator of the SDG7 Technical Working Group**, called for identifying potential indicators which can capture progress of SDG 7 interlinkages, stating that the dearth of data and lack of consistency in data today must be addressed.

Measuring energy's links with other SDGs

The advisory group specifically examined the data available and potential indicators to measure the role that energy plays in education (SDG 4), gender equality (SDG 5) and sustainable land use (SDG 15), among the goals that will be under in-depth consideration by this year's High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in July.

Ms. Oparaocha's presentation highlighted the following interlinkages:

- Access to affordable, reliable and modern energy in schools critically improves the quality of, and accessibility to, education. This is a priority given that globally, over 200 million children, most prominently in disadvantaged and rural communities, go to primary schools without electricity.
- Clean energy is also a precondition for the empowerment of all women and girls. Keys to closing the gender gap are investment in data, research and innovation to support women's access to modern energy services and appliances, and increased investment and support to including women at all levels of energy supply and decision making.
- Looking at the complexity and multi-faceted nature of sustainable land management, an overarching solution-driven priority is the need to reduce the energy-land footprint through increased land productivity, and to address conflicts between multiple uses of land.

Regional breakdowns and analyses are included in the Policy Briefs, as prepared by the relevant UN regional commissions, to provide insights and advice to decision-makers in those parts of the world. Highlights include the following key regional challenges:

- Africa remains the least energized region, with close to 80% of the 760 million people globally without access to electricity and 36% of the 2.6 billion people without access to clean cooking.
- In the Asia-Pacific region, the pace of energy intensity improvement is slowing, falling seriously short of the global target.
- In the Arab region, renewable energy penetration rates continue to lag other regions, with only 4.6% of the region's total final energy consumption covered by renewables, mainly from traditional biomass.
- The most significant development for the ECE region has been the Ukraine crisis and its consequences for energy prices and energy security.
- While Latin America has historically had the lowest energy intensity in the world, there has been no reduction in the region's energy intensity level since 2014, and additional efforts will be required to reach the target set for 2030.
- In the Least Developed Countries, access to energy is moving at a slower pace and falling behind actual needs to achieve structural transformation — a central pillar of the Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2022-2031, and critical to achieving all other SDGs.

The multi-stakeholder SDG7 Technical Advisory Group is composed of 40 experts from Governments, UN and international organizations, and other stakeholders, convened by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA).

The complete Policy Briefs, membership of the Advisory Group and more information can be found [online](#).