



**1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Technical Working Group on  
Enabling SDGs through Inclusive, Just Energy Transitions  
25 February 2021 – 8:00 to 11:00 AM (NY Time)  
Meeting Summary**

The first meeting of the Technical Working Group on Enabling SDGs through Inclusive, Just Energy Transitions focused on how SDG7 (affordable and clean energy) can help advance the other SDGs. Speakers stressed the need to focus on inclusion. The Working Group is one of five groups that are preparing recommendations to be presented to the High-Level Dialogue on Energy, which will convene at the Summit level in September 2021. This Working Group is being co-led by three UN entities: World Health Organization (WHO), UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), and UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA).

**1. Special Address: Accelerating SDG7 Achievement**

Damilola Ogunbiyi, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Sustainable Energy for All, Co-Chair of UN-Energy, and Co-Chair of the High-level Dialogue on Energy, said being inclusive requires looking at challenges in a localized way. She recalled that many people worldwide lack electricity and access to clean cooking, which are critical to agriculture, food security, health outcomes, and gender outcomes.

**2. Welcome Remarks by the Co-Leads**

All three Co-Lead organisations were represented in the welcoming remarks.

Maria Neira, Director, Public Health, Environmental and Social Determinants of Health, WHO, noted a forthcoming WHO report to UNFCCC COP 26 on 'The Health Arguments for Climate Action,' and called for discussing "healthy energy." Neira said WHO will organize a high-level meeting on the Health and Energy Platform for Action in April 2021.

Minoru Takada, DESA, said the Working Group is unique in its focus on advancing the SDGs as a whole, not only the energy agenda. Recalling the 2019 edition of the Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR), Takada said scientists from around the world recognized that advancing the energy agenda is an important strategy for achieving the SDGs

Radia Sedaoui, Chief of Energy Section, ESCWA, said the Working Group has an opportunity to present a unique outcome: for the first time, sustainable energy could be considered as a human right, alongside the right to water.

**3. Overview of the HLD Energy 2021**

With DESA serving as Secretariat of the High-level Dialogue on Energy, Takada presented an overview of the preparatory process. He said the process will develop the roadmap for reaching global energy goals. The recommendations will be considered at a Thematic Ministerial Forum co-hosted by Nauru, Panama, and the United Arab Emirates, who are the Global Theme Champions for this Working Group.

**4. Open discussion**

During the open discussion, members of the Working Group, Global Theme Champion representatives, and representatives of member organizations of UN-Energy offered suggestions for the recommendations the Working Group will develop based on the Concept Note. Speakers raised the following points:

- Specific linkages that were highlighted for inclusion in the Working Group report were: Health (SDG3); Education and job creation (SDG4 & 8); Gender equality and women's empowerment (SDG5); Clean water and sanitation (SDG6); Ending poverty and reducing inequalities (SDG1 & 10); Responsible consumption and production (SDG12); Climate action (SDG13); Life below water (SDG14); Life on land (SDG15) Just institutions (SDG16)
- The bidirectional nature of the relationship between SDG7 and all other SDGs, including trade-offs and synergies related to the goals
- Energy transition will have winners and losers, for example, more than 50 countries expected to have revenue shortfalls from the falling demand for oil and gas.
- The need to provide accessible tools and processes that can be replicated by people in different countries.
- Emphasis inclusivity, focusing especially on the needs of women and the poor – those who are most disadvantaged by a lack of access to energy. Youth, particularly in the global south will need to be involved in driving SDG7.
- Building capacity for women working in the energy transition and building economies of nurturing that put gender and energy inclusion at the centre whilst investing in green livelihoods that reduce carbon emissions.
- Ensuring that energy financing reaches the poor so that people can start small businesses.
- Energy transition must also be resilient and energy sources should be of high quality and reliable whilst also addressing the need to reduce energy demand.
- The need for decentralized and distributed systems, including solar sharing.
- Quantifying co-benefits and communicating about the energy transition in terms of the other SDGs, such as lives saved from reduced air pollution and new jobs created for women and youth.

### **Conclusion and next steps**

Summarizing key messages from the discussion, Heather Adair-Rohani, WHO, said participants had emphasized inclusivity, in particular the need to account for vulnerable populations, fully engage youth, and make women an integral part of all aspects of the energy transition. She also observed that participants may wish to identify more interlinkages than originally suggested, and that case studies should illustrate impacts on multiple SDGs at once.

- Working Group Members were asked to submit written inputs to the Secretariat at [sedaoui@un.org](mailto:sedaoui@un.org), using the Concept Note and the points raised in the meeting to guide their submissions.
- 10 March 2021: Annotated outline sent to Members
- 17 March 2021: Comments on the annotated outline from Members due
- 6 April 2021: First draft report sent to Members
- Week of 12 April 2021: **Second Meeting:** First draft, with a draft Matrix of Actions.
- Week of 26 April 2021: **Third Meeting:** Cross-Technical Working Groups discussions to ensure synergies and coherence.
- Week of 17 May 2021: **Fourth Meeting:** Final report endorsement and next steps, with the final Matrix of Actions.