



**United Nations**



**HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUE ON ENERGY**  
UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 2021

**1st Meeting of the Technical Working Group (TWG) on Energy Access  
24 February 2021 – 8:00 to 11:00 AM (NY Time)  
Meeting Summary**

The first meeting of the Technical Working Group on Energy Access (TWG1) convened virtually on Wednesday, 24 February 2021, from 8:00 to 10:50 am EST (NY time).

The meeting focused its discussion on how to accelerate electrification and clean cooking towards achieving SDG7. The Technical Working Group on Energy Access is one of five groups that are preparing evidence-based recommendations to be presented at the High-Level Dialogue on Energy (HLDE) in September 2021.

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

Ms. 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, welcomed participants to the meeting. She recalled the historic importance of the High-Level Dialogue on Energy, noting that it will be the first meeting of Heads of State and Government under UNGA auspices to address the global energy agenda since 1981.

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

On behalf of the three Co-Leads, Ms. Heidi Schroderus-Fox, Director, UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS), highlighted challenges related to the objective to accelerate access to safe, clean, and affordable energy for all.

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

Mr. Minoru Takada, Team Leader, Secretariat of the High-level Dialogue on Energy, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), introduced the preparatory process and leadership for the High-Level Dialogue on Energy. He noted that the Energy Access Theme will be supported by six Global Champions (China, Japan, Kenya, Malawi, The Netherlands, and the Russian Federation), over 40 experts, and three Co-Leads (UNDP, UN OHRLLS and World Bank).

**4. Ensuring Universal Energy Access: Role of TWG1 and presentation of Concept Note**

Mr. Marcel Alers, Global Head of Energy, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), introduced the concept note as well as the proposed timeline and working modalities for the group. He stressed the need for TWG1 discussions to encompass both access to electricity as well as to clean cooking solutions, as access to clean cooking continues to lag severely behind, as well as the importance to focus on the interconnectedness of energy access as an enabler for all other SDGs and the climate agenda.

**5. Open Discussion**

During the open discussion, Technical Working Group Members, Member State Global Theme Champions, and UN-Energy Member Organizations offered suggestions for focus areas and priorities for the report that the Technical Working Group (TWG) will develop.

- Universal energy access as a cornerstone of human development, economic growth, and climate change adaptation.
- Tackling both access to electricity and clean cooking on an equal basis.

- The implications from the COVID-19 pandemic regarding energy access.
- Expanding the existing electric grid and developing mini grids and off-grid options.
- The needs of end users should be placed at the center.
- The role of data and the importance of the SDG7 Tracking Report to monitor progress.
- Regarding financing for energy access, equity and inclusion metrics were proposed.
- The need for diverse financial sources, including concessional.
- Removal of fossil fuel subsidies, and “smart subsidies”.
- The Energy Compacts has tool to mobilise political support and catalyse action.
- The narrative around energy access, including the history of the current situation.
- The need to focus on “last mile” efforts needed to ensure that no one is left behind.
- The role of universities and students in exploring new issues and models.
- The gender perspectives is critical to any energy access discussions.
- Children and youth can contribute significantly to tackling energy access issues.
- The need to create new business models.
- Linkages with other intergovernmental processes and meetings.
- Creating synergies with other TWGs and Themes of the High-Level Dialogue.

### **Conclusion and Next Steps**

Mr. Rohit Khanna, ESMAP Manager, World Bank, closed the meeting by highlighting that the High-Level Dialogue on Energy represents a generational opportunity to build political momentum for the energy access agenda. He pointed out that the preparatory process provides an opportunity for participants to learn from one another as well as to define the roadmap for achieving the SDGs by 2030 and net zero emissions by 2050.

- TWG1 Members were asked to submit written inputs by 4 March 2021 by email to the Secretariat at [Amir.Bahr@seforall.org](mailto:Amir.Bahr@seforall.org), using the guiding questions in Section B of the Concept Note.
- Based on these comments, the Co-Chairs will share an annotated outline by 11 March.
- Comments on the outline should be submitted by 18 March.
- The first draft of the report will be available the week of 12 April.
- The second meeting of the Group will take place the week of 18 April.
- The Group will have its final meeting the week of 10 May.