

REVIEW

FOR PARLIAMENTARIANS

A PERIODIC BRIEF ON RENEWABLE ENERGY

IN THIS ISSUE

RENEWABLE ENERGY BENEFITS 2

Responding to the COVID crisis and ensuring sustainable development

CASE STUDIES 4

Italy, Nigeria, Republic of Korea

POINT OF VIEW 4

Ibtissame Azzaoui, Morocco

IN FOCUS 5

Renewable-based stimulus packages bring employment and growth benefits

POLICY COMPASS 7

Measures to stimulate recovery and accelerate the energy transition

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS 9

IRENA LEGISLATORS DIALOGUE 10

2021 IRENA LEGISLATORS FORUM 11

Report to the IRENA eleventh Assembly

ENGAGING WITH IRENA THROUGHOUT THE YEAR 12

THE POST-COVID RECOVERY: AN AGENDA FOR DEVELOPMENT, RESILIENCE AND EQUALITY

The COVID-19 pandemic has devastated people's lives around the world. On top of the tragic death toll, widespread lockdown measures have thrown the global economy into a severe crisis – one set to become the worst recession since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

The need to lock down economies to combat the virus has severely affected multiple sectors, caused massive job losses in many countries and slashed incomes and economic prospects around the world. Demand has tumbled in energy markets, to varying degrees, precipitating the steepest drop in oil prices in two decades. While some developments of recent months may prove temporary, the world after COVID-19 will clearly be different.

Shutting down large parts of the economy has led to significant, temporary, cuts in greenhouse-gas emissions, with global industrial emissions in 2020 expected to show their largest annual drop since the Second World War. However, if anything, this just serves to highlight how little progress in decarbonisation the world is making.

Policy makers now have a unique chance – to align short-term investments, regulations and policies with the long-term need for decarbonised economies and societies. By placing energy transitions at the centre of national recovery plans, governments can alleviate the current economic downturn and simultaneously tackle the climate crisis.



Photograph: Shutterstock

RENEWABLE ENERGY BENEFITS

RESPONDING TO THE COVID CRISIS AND ENSURING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- » **Government policies and investment choices to respond to COVID crisis can create the self-perpetuating momentum to enact systemic change and deliver the energy transformation.**
- » **To support a sustained shift in local economies, industrial policies and targeted education and training programmes are needed to build tomorrow's workforce and foster diverse segments of the value chain.**

The energy sector, always at the centre of the global economy, plays a crucial role amid the coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis. Response measures, including widespread lockdowns, have disrupted production and supply chains, shrunk demand for goods and services, depressed commodity prices and caused a massive economic contraction around the world. Alongside the health crisis, hundreds of millions of people have lost their jobs or seen their livelihoods threatened.

Renewable energy, while suffering along with the whole global economy, has proven to be more resilient than other parts of the sector. With energy demand for transport and industrial uses plunging, fossil fuels have been hit hard. Oil prices have fallen sharply, raising concerns about volatility and long-term viability even as fossil fuels begin to show signs of recovery, at least in the short-term. Meanwhile, electricity systems with high shares of renewables continue to operate effectively.

When incorporated into stimulus and recovery plans, the energy transition can represent a far-sighted investment. The crisis has further unveiled inadequacies of the current system, both in terms of reliance on fossil fuels and massive gaps in energy access, which in turn affect healthcare, water supply, information and communication technologies and other vital services. An investment package focused on the energy transition can help to overcome the economic slump and create much-needed jobs, both for the short-term and beyond.

Linking the short-term recovery to medium and long-term strategies is paramount to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Policy measures and investments for stimulus and recovery can drive a wider structural shift, fostering national and regional energy transition strategies as a decisive step in building resilient economies and societies. The energy sector must be viewed as an integral part of the broader economy to fully understand the impact of the transition, and ensure it is timely and just.

Energy transition investment can boost the economy over the 2021-23 recovery phase and create a wide range of jobs. Stimulus measures can accelerate positive ongoing trends. In 2019, renewables and other transition-related technologies attracted investments worth USD 824 billion. In the 2021-2023-recovery phase, such investments should more than double to nearly USD 2 trillion and then continue to grow to an annual average of USD 4.5 trillion in the decade to 2030. Government funds can leverage private investments by a factor of 3-4 and should be used strategically to nudge investment decisions and financing in the right direction.

Institutional investment and green bonds will be vital, along with dedicated credit, investment and funding programmes. For now, the pandemic appears to have sharpened investor interest in sustainable assets. Institutional investors may opt to focus more on renewables in the recovery and beyond. By aligning their investment portfolios to a climate-safe future, investors can also be better prepared to anticipate new regulatory demand and evolving fiduciary standards.

Socio-economic benefits would already accrue in the first three years of recovery programmes, while simultaneously accelerating the energy transition. If the required investment is mobilised and nimble recovery policies are put in place, the transition would boost GDP by 1% more, on average over three years, than current plans.

Each million dollars invested in renewables or energy flexibility would create at least 25 jobs, while each million invested in efficiency would create about 10 jobs. With the added investment stimulus energy transition-related technologies would add 5.5 million more jobs by 2023 than would be possible under less ambitious scenario with renewables accounting for 2.46 million of these additional jobs.

The transition would achieve net job gains in all regions of the world, including those where fossil-fuel jobs are now concentrated. This creates meaningful options to switch from fossil-fuel employment and provides new

opportunities for both skilled and unskilled workers from other industries. Such benefits hinge on leveraging and enhancing local industrial capacities, strengthening supply chains, putting in place adequate education and training programmes, and adopting suitable labour market policies. Forward-looking industrial policies can create green industries, in both developed and developing countries.

Investments starting now can put renewable power generation on track to grow five times faster than current plans would indicate. Such ramping up requires substantial upfront spending, as well re-evaluating the cost-effectiveness of existing assets.

Recovery measures over the next three years can either trigger a decisive shift toward resilient energy systems or ensure an enduring lock-in with unsustainable practices. A holistic policy approach – rooted in the climate-safe energy development, yet also focused on short-term imperatives – would reap multiple benefits and help set the stage for a just transition.

Renewable power projects – including existing utility-scale plants and those under construction, distributed generation investments and renewables-ready network infrastructure – must be safeguarded. Alongside renewable power generation, measures could stimulate supply industries (e.g. battery factories), enabling infrastructure (smart grids, grid reinforcements, EV charging, district heating and cooling, hydrogen), energy efficiency and increased electrification of end uses.

Energy investments undertaken as a short-term response to the pandemic's effects can support increasingly ambitious longer-term targets for renewables and efficiency in all sectors, as well as reinforce enhanced climate pledges. Current Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement – as far as they set renewable power targets – lag compared to already-apparent market trends. If renewable power continues growing at the same rates as seen in 2015-18, the cumulative global targets now in place for 2030 could be met as soon as 2022.

Short-term measures can also drive the energy transition in end uses like heat and transport that account for a large share of total energy demand. The post-COVID stimulus package could encompass renewable-based heating and cooling systems combined with energy efficiency measures in buildings; electromobility based on renewable power sources; and transport fuels based on bioenergy or green hydrogen.

Increased electrification of end-use infrastructure, including via electric vehicle (EV) charging and electrolysis for hydrogen production, is another requirement for a decarbonised energy system.

Investment decisions must go hand-in-hand with policies to ensure that industrial and other economic capabilities are aligned with recovery and transition objectives. Careful policy attention is needed to ramp up existing manufacturing capacity, building supply chains, and expanding the available pool of skilled labour in parallel with boosting investment.

To foster a just transition, labour and social protection policies must be tailored to the specific needs of each region and country. Labour-market interventions can include employment services (matching jobs with qualified applicants; facilitating on- and off-job training; and providing safety nets), along with relocation grants and other measures to facilitate labour mobility where necessary. Programmes could also support the retention of fossil-fuel workers whose skills can be reoriented for the energy transition. Social equity considerations, in particular gender aspects, must be integrated into policy and programme design, in order to fully tap societal potential and to ensure that no one is left behind.

For further reading:

Post-COVID recovery: An agenda for resilience, development and equality (IRENA, 2020)



CASE STUDIES



ITALY

Italy, being among the economies across the world that have been gravely affected by the COVID-19 disruptions and at very early stages of the pandemic, announced an economic plan to introduce measures aiming at recovering the economy with the introduction of tax reduction schemes for various green energy solutions like solar power and domestic electric car charging points. The plan includes a significant revision of the “Ecobonus”, a tax scheme that will further promote an environmentally and socially sustainable recovery by granting the purchase of energy efficient and/or green devices and systems with a tax reduction of up to 110%.



NIGERIA

In an economic plan titled “bouncing back” presented in June 2020, Nigeria has set its priorities on “promoting sustainable research and development in renewable and alternative energy sources.” With an ambitious goal of installing 5 million solar systems for homes, the Country is expected to increase energy access by supply with electricity additional 25 million people through this plan which will also create 250,000 new jobs.



REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Since adopting a Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) policy in 2012 to increase the market share of renewable energy, South Korea has made several strides to pave the way for renewable energy. In its post-Covid recovery plan, the Country has seized the green energy opportunity by increasing investment in renewables. About 1.7 trillion won (\$1.4 Billion) has been set aside to aid Small Medium Enterprises with green and sustainable business models while 5.4 trillion won (\$4.6 Billion) is expected to be spent on solar, wind, and hydrogen energy infrastructure: these measures will significantly increase the number of new jobs.

POINT OF VIEW

Ibtissame Azzaoui, Member of Parliament, Morocco

Morocco is a world pioneer in renewable energy integration. Targeting 42% of its total power to come from renewables by the end of this year 2020, and 52% by 2030.

Morocco’s energy transition is based on strong political and parliamentary support; the Parliament gives priority to sustainability and to the development of diversified renewable energies (solar, wind and others) to satisfy growing electricity demand, preserve the environment, and reduce dependence on polluting resources.

To implement this strategy, the Parliament has established an important legal framework. As Moroccan legislators, in the recent past we voted on many laws: creation of new institutions to strengthen the governance of the sector, liberalization of the electricity market, regulation of the power production from renewable sources, in addition to other measures relating to energy efficiency.

The post COVID19 will bring a new generation of challenges at all levels and a new energy paradigm. The pandemic demonstrated the need to prioritize an energy transition powered by renewable energy on the global agenda as it can play a key role in the economic recovery plans. Parliamentary leadership is crucial to succeed the upcoming challenges.



Mrs. Ibtissame Azzaoui has been elected as one of the youngest members of the Moroccan Parliament since 2016 and is a member of the Foreign Affairs committee.

She is also the MENA’s region Chapter Chair of the international parliamentary network UNITE and member of the Climate Parliament.

She also has been a member of the joint commission between the Moroccan Parliament and the European Parliament. She is Engineer and a PhD Researcher.

RENEWABLE-BASED STIMULUS PACKAGES BRING EMPLOYMENT AND GROWTH BENEFITS

- » **Well-crafted deployment, integrating and enabling policies for renewable energy could create millions of new jobs as countries around the world pursue sustainable long-term energy solutions.**
- » **Coherent policy-making, adjusted for the economic and social context of each region, can deliver on climate and energy goals effectively and fairly.**
- » **Accelerated uptake of renewables could boost total energy jobs to 100 million by 2050.**

Spurred by the need to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic with a green recovery investment push, an acceleration of the energy transition can bring substantial socioeconomic benefits, specifically the creation of much-needed jobs and economic benefits.

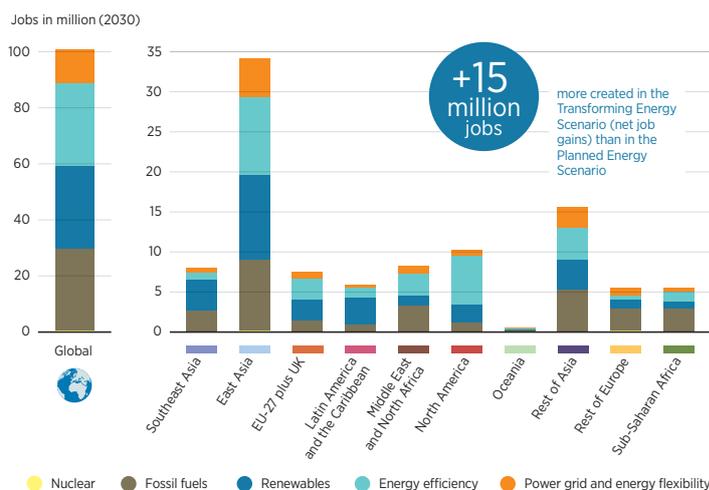
The so-called employment intensity of investment, meaning the employment generated for each unit of investment, varies from one technology to the next. Investing in energy transition technologies creates close to three times more jobs than fossil fuels do, for each million dollars of spending.

At the same time, significant regional differences reflect specific country conditions, such as the depth and characteristics of local value chains, energy and commodity dependencies, and trade relationships.

Policy makers have an opportunity currently to raise the ambition of their energy transition plans and to strengthen the associated value chains by merging those transition plans with COVID-19 recovery programmes. Doing so will leverage the positive employment impact of the energy transition.

Considerable employment potential of green recovery programmes – IRENA’s report *Global Renewables Outlook: Energy transformation 2050* reveals that investing in the energy transition would lead to 100 million people being employed in the energy sector by 2030 under the Transforming Energy Scenario, up 74% from today’s 58 million – and 15 million more than under the Planned Energy Scenario, which is based on nations’ current plans and commitments.

Jobs in renewables would grow to almost 30 million in 2030 from about 12 million in 2017. Employment in energy efficiency would expand from under 10 million to 29 million, while grids and energy system flexibility would likely see an increase from 7.4 million to 12 million workers. In each case, the more ambitious Transforming Energy Scenario offers significant gains over the Planned Energy Scenario.



Designing appropriate labour and educational policies

- Well-designed labour market policies and forward-looking education and training programmes are needed to support the growth of a skilled renewable energy workforce and to address skills gaps that may emerge as the sector expands and evolves. Policies can facilitate the process in a number of ways, such as enhancing the quality not only of university curricula but also of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) programmes; incorporating information technologies for remote learning (of great significance in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis); ensuring continuity of education and training for current students through improved use of information technology; and integrating energy and climate education in primary, secondary and tertiary education.

Adopt comprehensive labour policies - While the energy transition offers many opportunities for job creation, labour market policies must also address structural changes, notably temporal, spatial, educational or sectoral misalignments. As the energy transition unfolds, altered occupational and skills patterns will be just as critical as changes in employment numbers. Because labour challenges are context-specific, labour policies for a just transition will depend on the specific circumstances of each region and country.

Effective labour market interventions include adequate employment services (matching jobs with qualified applicants; facilitating on- and off-job training; and implementing job safety nets), along with measures to facilitate labour mobility where necessary, such as relocation grants.

Leveraging local capacity can create considerable job opportunities

The renewable energy sector will also benefit from labour policies that embrace and encourage best practices in worker safety, remuneration, and workplace rights and quality standards. The desire to ensure that jobs are of high quality should be reflected in both short-term stimulus packages and longer-term policy responses.

Flexible work arrangements, voluntary forms of part-time work, and work-from home with the help of video-conferencing software are important ways to recruit and retain talent, not only in the immediate aftermath of COVID-19 but also in the long term.

Enhance education and training, including technical and vocational programmes - Developing adequate education and training programmes can help avoid or minimise skills gaps. This requires monitoring how skills profiles evolve, identifying potential skills gaps, and working with educational institutions and the renewable energy industry to address any mismatches between skill-building profiles and the inventory of skills required by the energy transition.

TVET institutions need financial and technical support to ensure a high degree of training quality. Curriculum standards must keep pace with the skills needed in a continuously evolving renewable energy sector; instructors must receive training as needed; equipment

must be kept up to date; and information and communications technologies must figure prominently. To ensure that skills development meets the needs of the renewable energy sector, TVET training in manufacturing, in particular, should move beyond skills such as metal working and welding to train workers in areas such as advanced material development and digital design.

Accreditation of programmes and certification of graduates will play a key role. Workplace learning opportunities such as apprenticeships should also be integrated into TVET programmes. Targeted scholarships, outreach and mentoring can all be deployed to attract more women and girls to programmes focused on renewable energy.

Support renewable energy education from an early age

- Building local professional capacity to develop, manage and execute renewable energy projects will require close partnerships among universities, governments and firms to ensure that energy curricula prepare students for renewable energy careers in engineering, management and policy, and other fields. Education policies also need to build the capacity of teachers.

Exposing young people to renewable energy-related topics and careers early in their schooling is a good way to build their interest and understanding. This can be done by including energy and climate education in primary, secondary and tertiary education. Such integration into national curriculum frameworks could focus not only on science and technology but also include social and environmental dimensions of the energy transition.

For further reading:

Global Renewables Outlook: Energy transformation 2050 (IRENA, 2020)

Post-COVID recovery: An agenda for resilience, development and equality (IRENA, 2020)



Photograph: Shutterstock

SHORT-TERM MEASURES TO STIMULATE RECOVERY AND ACCELERATE THE ENERGY TRANSITION

The involuntary pause that COVID-19 imposed on the global economy offers a unique opportunity to recalibrate the role of energy policies in strategic economic decision making. Recovery efforts can and should be consistent with the trajectory of an ambitious energy transition, building on the principles expressed in Agenda 2030 in the 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change. When designing response measures, policy makers need to:

• USE PUBLIC FINANCE STRATEGICALLY

- » Provide risk-mitigation instruments (e.g., guarantees, currency hedging instruments and liquidity reserve facilities) to mobilise private capital.
- » Shift public finance away from fossil fuels towards energy transition-related investment.
- » Make financial support to carbon-intensive companies conditional on measurable climate action.
- » Make energy industry bailouts conditional on the replacement of fossil fuel plants with new renewable energy facilities or on meeting targets for renewable energy generation.
- » Implement carbon pricing to avoid a distorted economic uptake as the pandemic recedes.
- » Mobilise public financing to trigger investment in enabling infrastructure for renewable power (e.g., smart grids, cross-country interconnectors), heat (district heating and cooling networks), and transport (e.g., charging stations for EVs).
- » Identify and eliminate risks associated with the delivery of renewable heat and gas projects, such as mandating zones to guarantee demand and streamlining permitting procedures.

• INCREASE NATIONAL CLIMATE AMBITIONS AND RAISE ENERGY TRANSITION-RELATED TARGETS

- » Adopt ambitious energy transition-related targets in the next round of NDCs.
- » Align NDCs with energy transition plans and recovery measures.
- » Set and align renewable energy targets in all end uses (electricity, heating and cooling, transport).
- » Increase short- and medium-term targets to account for additional short-term procurement of new renewable capacity in 2020 and 2021.

• MAINTAIN EXISTING PROJECTS AND INVESTMENT PLANS

- » Support operating renewable energy plants in the context of falling electricity demand.
- » Safeguard renewable energy projects facing construction delays.
- » Safeguard investment in distributed generation by installing systems in public buildings and introducing supporting instruments (e.g., capital subsidies, net metering/billing).
- » Maintain investment in planned projects.
- » Trigger investment in renewables for end uses.

• DIVERSIFY SUPPLY CHAINS

- » Reduce entry barriers for local firms seeking access to value chains.
- » Develop productive capabilities that can feed into renewable supply chains.
- » Promote the shift to regional value chains, thereby fostering global resilience to exogenous shocks.
- » Base targets on sound data and projections. Impact should be assessed properly both in terms of renewable energy deployment and investment needs.

• PROMOTE PARTICIPATION OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS TO INCREASE OWNERSHIP AND ACCEPTANCE

- » Introduce social protection measures for energy workers affected by the pandemic-induced recession.
- » Create new job opportunities by leveraging local capacities for energy transition technologies all along the value chain.
- » Provide reskilling opportunities for workers who have lost or are at risk of losing employment, including fossil fuel workers.
- » Enhance online remote-learning opportunities to ensure continuity of education in renewable energy for students and trainees.

Further reading:

Post-COVID recovery: An agenda for resilience, development and equality (IRENA, 2020)

POLICY COMPASS

MEASURES NEEDED THROUGH 2030 AND BEYOND

Mobilising the finance needed to scale up investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency requires swift and decisive policy measures in several areas. To realise the energy transition-related investments, policy makers need to:

• SCALE UP POWER TRANSITION INVESTMENT BY:

- » Fast-tracking licensing, customised loans, and long-term power purchase agreements resulting from auctions to support the deployment of mature renewable electricity technologies.
- » Expanding R&D and providing subsidies and grants for emerging renewable electricity technologies.
- » Developing flexibility options, including grids and pumped hydro, through centralised planning, fast tracked licensing, and customised loans; and smart meters, batteries and other storage technologies through financial incentives.
- » Redesigning the power market to provide stable and long-term signals to renewable generators while rewarding short-term flexibility.
- » Enhancing cross-border trading of electricity.
- » Supporting the electrification of end-uses by synchronising renewable power plants with plans and measures to electrify transport and heating and cooling.

• SCALE UP HEATING AND COOLING TRANSITION INVESTMENT BY:

- » Introducing renewable energy quotas for suppliers and mandating the use of renewable heat when connected to a network.
- » Introducing renewable energy quotas and mandates for decentralised heat through building codes.
- » Providing financial incentives to subsidise the higher capital costs of renewable heat options in buildings and industry.
- » Investing in innovation, R&D and demonstration projects to support less mature technologies (e.g., green hydrogen).

• SCALE UP ENERGY ACCESS BY:

- » Allocating funding for national electrification and clean cooking plans in national budgets.
- » Dedicate funding facilities to deliver financing tailored to utilities, enterprises, and consumers.
- » Ensuring that scarce public financing is effectively deployed by promoting solutions, such as results-based financing, that can improve viability and mobilise private capital.
- » Building adequate capacity among local financial institutions and intermediaries to expand access to financing for energy access and linked productive activities.
- » Identifying energy gaps across sectors that could be addressed through distributed energy solutions.
- » Ensuring inclusivity in access to financing for energy enterprises and end users.
- » Ensuring adequate and reliable supply of modern energy to schools, health care facilities and community centres.

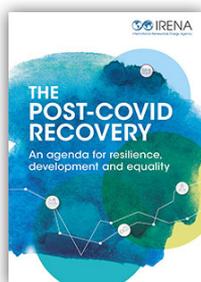
• MOBILIZE GREEN ENERGY INVESTMENT BY:

- » Boosting the participation of institutional investors in the green sector by lowering barriers hampering their investment.
- » Setting up comprehensive, supportive and clear policy frameworks to attract further investment in renewable energy and accelerate the energy transition.
- » Establishing sustainability requirements for investors, such as climate-risk analysis and disclosure.
- » Reviewing investment restrictions and capital adequacy rules and establishing long-term sustainability mandates for institutional investors, including minimum asset allocation targets for green sectors, such as renewables.
- » Adopting green bond standards in line with global climate objectives.
- » Reviewing investment restrictions and sustainability mandates for institutional investors and mandating a minimum allocation to green assets.
- » Creating pipelines of bankable renewable energy projects.
- » Supporting green bonds through seed capital, demonstration issuances and capacity building.

Further reading:

Post-COVID recovery: An agenda for resilience, development and equality (IRENA, 2020)

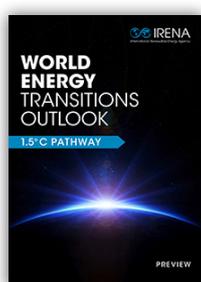
SELECTED PUBLICATIONS



POST-COVID RECOVERY: AN AGENDA FOR RESILIENCE, DEVELOPMENT AND EQUALITY

This report from IRENA offers practical advice on key investment and policy decisions for the crucial post-COVID recovery. It is rooted in the comprehensive long-term energy transformation strategy provided by IRENA's first Global Renewables Outlook.

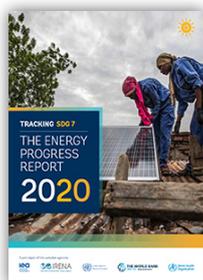
IRENA, June 2020



WORLD ENERGY TRANSITIONS OUTLOOK: 1.5°C PATHWAY (PREVIEW)

The World Energy Transitions Outlook preview outlines a pathway for the world to achieve the Paris Agreement goals and halt the pace of climate change by transforming the global energy landscape. This preview presents options to limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C and bring CO₂ emissions closer to net zero by mid-century, offering high-level insights on technology choices, investment needs and the socio-economic contexts of achieving a sustainable, resilient and inclusive energy future.

IRENA, March 2021



TRACKING SDG 7: THE ENERGY PROGRESS REPORT (2020)

This joint tracking report monitors and assesses global progress in the quest for sustainable, affordable, reliable and modern energy services for everyone. Published annually by the custodian agencies of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 7 on energy, the report serves to guide international co-operation and policy-making to achieve universal, sustainable energy access by 2030.

IRENA, May, 2020



REVIEW FOR PARLIAMENTARIANS: ISSUE 11 INSIGHTS FROM THE FIFTH IRENA LEGISLATORS FORUM

This edition gives a full account of the discussions held during the fifth IRENA Legislators Forum held in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, in conjunction with the Agency's ninth annual Assembly. Parliamentarians from over 30 countries gathered to discuss challenges and opportunities as well as parliamentary action to accelerate the energy transformation while engaging communities and promoting a fair and just transition.

English Français Español

RENEWABLES AS AN ENABLER OF SERVICES

On July 2020, IRENA held its first IRENA Legislators Dialogue, bringing together parliamentarians from around the world to discuss the merits of a renewables-based response to the COVID-19 pandemic. By improving energy access, renewable energy can play an important role as an enabler of services and in ensuring how a social inclusion approach can strengthen communities' living standards and development in the next decade.

The Dialogue was moderated by Dr. Kandeh Yumkella, MP in Sierra Leone, and opened by IRENA Director-General Francesco La Camera together with Douka Sediko, ECOWAS Commissioner for Energy and Mines.

In his early remarks at the meeting, Dr. Yumkella set the tone by outlining the centrality of a low-carbon energy system to the achievement of development goals: "Before COVID-19 we already knew that energy transitions were important whether to deal with climate change or human development," he said.

The importance of renewable energy in achieving many of the sustainable development goals was a recurrent theme throughout the discussion. MPs underscored the unique characteristics that make renewable energy the most effective option in providing rural communities with reliable and affordable energy.

Participants highlighted that rapidly deployable renewable energy solutions, such as off-grid solar, can be utilised quickly to enable healthcare, education and clean cooking in developing countries. Furthermore, in developed and developing countries alike, a renewables-based recovery can result in significant job growth and can re-stimulate the global economy after being impacted by COVID-19.

"As governments design measures to address the post pandemic recovery, they need to ensure resilience of economies and societies," said Director-General Francesco La Camera adding that parliamentarians can play a central role in the adoption of stimulus and recovery packages that prioritise sustainable energy.

Douka Sediko took the opportunity to announce their partnership with IRENA to develop a future Legislators Dialogue for West-African Parliamentarians, aimed at supporting the accelerated deployment of renewables and emphasizing renewable energy's role as an enabler of



Panelists of the IRENA Legislators Dialogue

services in the region. "The pandemic has complicated our efforts to achieve the regional targets of the region's renewable energy strategies, demonstrating the need to build regional partnerships, attract capital and investments in the ECOWAS region and develop policies and enabling frameworks," Sediko said.

The ECOWAS commission therefore welcomes the initiative to organise a Legislators Dialogue with members of the ECOWAS parliament and other relevant stakeholders.

Issues around the lack of available capital were also addressed, highlighting the need for enabling frameworks that can attract the capital needed to fund bankable projects in developing countries. MPs were unanimous in their support for IRENA's initiative to promote knowledge sharing and cooperation through its Legislators Dialogue series and agreed to IRENA's proposal to develop a more regional approach in future legislator dialogues.

Parliamentarians can play a central role in the adoption of stimulus and recovery packages that prioritise sustainable energy. Their political leadership and initiative are needed now more than ever

2021 IRENA LEGISLATORS FORUM

REPORT TO THE IRENA ELEVENTH ASSEMBLY 21 JANUARY 2021

100 Legislators representing over 50 countries virtually met to hold the 6th IRENA Legislators Forum hosted by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) on 13 January 2021 to discuss about “Parliamentary Actions to Scale Up Renewable Investments: Renewable Energy as an Enabler of Services”.

Very early in the discussions at the meeting, access to modern and sustainable energy services was identified as an area of high concern and deliberation considering the current global health and economic crisis. To this effect, the 2021 virtual edition of the IRENA Legislators Forum explored short- and medium-term actions that parliamentarians can promote to mobilise and increase investments in the renewable energy sector, both at local and national level, and enable services that can provide a range of benefits in creating significant economic and employment opportunities, improve healthcare services, address climate change issues as well as food challenges and opportunities in the agriculture sector.

Participants to the 2021 IRENA Legislators Forum renewed their commitment as Parliamentarians in promoting the deployment of renewable energy projects and supporting the scaling up of renewable investments to accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the targets set by the Paris Agreement, but also with goals of enabling a cleaner, more efficient, and greener future for their countries while recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic.

In this regard, legislators also expressed need and appreciation for the role of IRENA in enabling national legislative and policy frameworks that support the deployment of renewable energy and welcomed the suite of project facilitation services developed by IRENA as toolset to support countries with their energy transitions in overcoming the challenges that come with securing investment for renewable energy. Legislators also recognised the need for multilateral partners to support countries in systematically and coherently addressing barriers to the achievement of a steady pipeline of investor-ready and scalable projects, while also tabling the opportunities that renewables can bring especially in the current time and situation that countries are facing.

Participants also emphasised that the shift to renewable-based energy systems requires the need to mobilize capital not only from private actors but also from institutional investors, such as pension plans, insurance companies, sovereign wealth funds, and foundations and endowments; it was highlighted by legislators also that public funds have to prioritize investments to drive a wider structural shift and foster national and regional energy transition strategies as a decisive step in building resilient economies and societies.

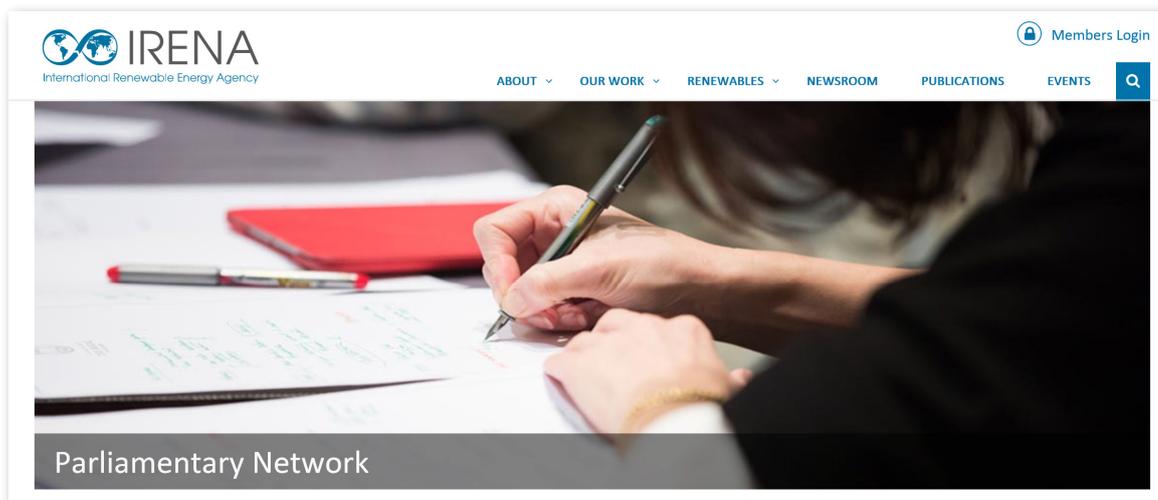
Parliamentarians encouraged IRENA to further support dialogue and co-operation with parliamentarians and parliamentary associations, including regional and global inter-parliamentary associations and facilitate when possible such collaborations to accelerate energy transitions.

In concluding the sixth IRENA Legislators Forum, the attending Parliamentarians once again welcomed the Legislators Forum as an effective platform to facilitate a sustained and continued dialogue between IRENA and parliamentarians, and across parliamentary organisations and associations. They echoed their support for such dialogues to promote the formulation of evidence based-policies and mechanisms.

**The report of the outcomes from the 2021 IRENA Legislators Forum was delivered to the 11th Session of the IRENA Assembly by Honourable Dr Kandeh Yumkella, Member of Parliament from Sierra Leone.*

Further insights and material, including the recording, on the 2021 IRENA Legislators Forum, are available [here](#)

ENGAGING WITH IRENA THROUGHOUT THE YEAR



RReview for Parliamentarians



Legislators Forum



Parliamentary Network (Facebook)

Tap into IRENA's expertise
through freely accessible publications,
infographics and up-to-date facts and figures
www.irena.org

Visit the IRENA **Parliamentary Network** page
www.irena.org/parliamentarynetwork

Subscribe to IRENA's **RReview for Parliamentarians**,
a periodic brief on renewable energy, the latest knowledge, experience and best practice
on policy, socio-economic benefits, finance and technology.

© IRENA 2021

Unless otherwise stated, this brief and material featured herein are the property of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) and are subject to copyright by IRENA.

Material in this brief may be freely used, shared, copied, reproduced, printed and/or stored, provided that all such material is clearly attributed to IRENA.

Material contained in this brief attributed to third parties may be subject to third party copyright and separate terms of use and restrictions.

Disclaimer

Some of the material featured in this brief are provided "as is". Neither IRENA nor any of its officials, agents, data or other third-party content providers provides any warranty, including as to the accuracy, completeness, or fitness for a particular purpose or use of such material in this brief, or regarding the non-infringement of third-party rights, and they accept no responsibility or liability with regard to the use of this brief and the material featured therein. The opinions expressed in this brief are the sole responsibility of their authors and presenters do not necessarily represent the views of IRENA or its Members. Nothing contained herein is an endorsement of any project, product or service provider.

The designations employed and the presentation of material herein do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of IRENA concerning the legal status of any region, country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.