



# Digital Seminar Series:

## 'Maximising the Impacts of Energy Access'

### Takeaways from Seminar 1: 'Setting the Scene'

This digital seminar series focuses on how to maximise the developmental effects of energy access. The first seminar sets the scene for the series by exploring those aspects that are crucial for maximising contributions to multiple SDGs. Our speakers: Dr. Long Seng To, Joint Director of STEER at Loughborough University, Angelica Shamerina, Advisor at GEF Small Grants Programme, UNDP, and Grace Ronoh, Programme Officer at ACCESS Coalition.

#### **On the potential synergies of energy and SDGs:**

- Clean energy is a key factor for
  - Enhancing the welfare and wellbeing of people
  - Ensuring the effective functioning of crucial infrastructure
  - Improving the environmental performance of our energy systems
- However, energy access also has some potential trade-offs. In order to deploy synergies and avoid trade-offs it is wise to base work on available knowledge resources and strategies focusing on people and communities:
  - Start by recognizing the strategies that households and communities already apply to ensure or improve the resilience of their livelihoods such as agronomy, entrepreneurial development, accounting, marketing, etc.
  - In this context, co-design the energy interventions taking into consideration the knowledge and capacities already available in the community and explore ways of enhancing and/or complementing these with external expertise

#### **On co-designing energy:**

- Take into account the development opportunities for the community and its energy needs at the energy policy and planning stage
- Promote community ownership of the projects
- Recognise and emphasise the linkages between energy access and the different components of people's livelihoods while deploying context-specific potentials for the productive use of energy
- Facilitate the active and leading participation of vulnerable groups in the community, such as women and young people
- Include actions for strengthening capacities of involved actors and consider peer-to-peer exchanges as an effective strategy for improving capacities within communities
- These actions should target both: (a) technical capacities, e.g., for using and maintaining energy systems and (b) non-technical capacities, such as business, managerial, organisational or financial skills

#### **On the contributions from civil society organisations:**

- Coordinated actions by civil society organisations are crucial to ensure that local energy priorities are considered at all relevant policy levels
- Promote the flow of information in two directions: (a) raise awareness among local actors and communities about national policy and planning processes and (b) work to ensure that the community's priorities are fed into policy and planning at all state levels
- Facilitate the establishment of multi-stakeholder dialogues and the participation of community representatives on such platforms
- Advocate for increased emphasis on decentralised renewable energy options in the policies and programmes of relevant large organisations – such as national governmental institutions and multilateral banks.



## Links to relevant resources:

### [Impact Pathways of Small-Scale Energy Projects in the Global South – Findings from a Systematic Evaluation](#)

In this study, the WISIONS team analyses the actual contribution that small-scale energy projects can make to the sustainable development of households and communities.

### [Mapping Synergies and Trade-Offs between Energy and the Sustainable Development Goals](#)

This study provides an informative overview of the synergies and trade-offs between efforts to achieve SDG7 and the overall delivery of Agenda 2030.

### [Empowered Generation: Youth Action on Climate Change Through the GEF Small Grants Programme](#)

This publication showcases studies from the Small Grants Programme portfolio in which young people have played a leading role in driving change towards sustainable development in their local situations. Energy access is a key component in many of these cases.

### [Scaling Up National and Sub-National Progress towards SDG 7 in Kenya](#)

This discussion paper is an excellent example of how civil society organisations can feed into and influence national policy in order to scale up progress towards SDG7 by taking into consideration the development priorities of local communities.

### [Ensuring Energy Access for All. Why Civil Society's Contribution is Crucial](#)

This report provides a comprehensive description of the different and crucial roles that civil society can play in transforming our energy systems into green and inclusive energy systems that catalyse development opportunities for all.

## To the digital seminar:

### [Setting the Scene – Maximising the impacts of energy access on people's development opportunities](#)