

## MODERN ENERGY FOR ALL CAN BUILD SUSTAINABLE, RESILIENT AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES



### ACCESS statement for the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, July 2018

47 countries are meeting this week at the United Nations in New York to review their progress on meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This includes SDG 7 on ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all by 2030. But the billions still living without modern energy risk being left behind unless business-as-usual energy investments and planning approaches are transformed.

One billion people have no electricity - one in five, rising to two out of three in sub-Saharan Africa. Three billion have no access to clean cooking fuels and technologies, resulting in devastating health impacts, especially for women and children under five. Over 80% of these people live in remote, rural areas far from electricity grids, in 'the last mile'. For over 70% of them, the quickest and most cost-effective way to access electricity is via decentralized systems powered by renewables like solar, wind and micro-hydro (International Energy Agency, 2017).

Modern energy is an enabler of sustainable development. In 2017, the Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL) initiative highlighted the potentially transformative benefits of the 'energy access dividend' across a range of SDGs, including ending poverty, reducing inequality, ending hunger, ensuring healthy lives, and inclusive and equitable education. Providing energy for small and micro businesses and smallholder farmers, key productive sectors for poor and marginal groups, can also boost inclusive economic development when combined with other forms of support.

Yet there remains a significant financing gap for energy access, with only 1% of funding globally going to decentralized renewable electricity and even less to clean cooking (SEforAll 2017). Equally, more inclusive and innovative planning, financing and delivery of energy services are needed to ensure no-one is left behind.

ACCESS calls on key stakeholders participating in the UN High Level Political Forum, including governments of energy poor countries, donor countries, and multi-lateral development banks to transform business-as-usual by:

- Scaling-up investments in energy access. At least 50% of public finance from donor countries for energy in developing countries should go to access, with two thirds going to decentralized renewable electricity and clean cooking solutions.
- Increasing patient capital and grant-based finance for energy enterprises and other groups delivering energy services in last mile and providing more affordable consumer finance. Non-market-based approaches are also needed to deliver access to the poorest groups.
- Adopting more meaningful metrics to determine whether communities currently have affordable, reliable, sustainable and safe modern energy services and to track progress on SDG7. The Global Tracking Framework (GTF) developed under SEforALL is one example.
- Integrating energy access into wider development planning at national and sub-national levels to realize its 'development dividend' and support delivery of other SDGs.
- Adopting more inclusive and gender-sensitive energy planning and decision-making. Services should be planned and delivered to meet communities' wider development needs, be financially, socially and environmentally sustainable, and ensure no-one is left no one behind.
- Ensuring the right enabling environment policies are in place, and that key stakeholders have the capacities and skills to design and deliver energy services for last-mile communities.

## About ACCESS

The **Alliance of CSOs for Clean Energy Access (ACCESS)** advocates for people living in poverty to have access to safe, reliable and affordable energy, and for environmentally sustainable and efficient energy systems globally.

ACCESS was founded in 2014. It has 65 members globally who between them have decades of experience delivering energy services to poor and marginal communities, carrying out research, capacity building and advocacy, and working with other stakeholders such as businesses, governments, international donors and investors.

We believe that to achieve SDG 7 on universal energy access by 2030, we need to go beyond business as-usual approaches to energy service planning and delivery to mobilize new, inclusive coalitions of stakeholders and adopt more inclusive energy planning and decision-making. Energy services have greatest poverty-reducing impact when they address the wider development needs of communities and are integrated with initiatives on food security, health, education and livelihoods.

We aim to use our expertise and experience of working with energy-poor communities to:

- Improve other stakeholders' understanding of the energy needs of poor communities;
- Raise awareness and build demand for energy services and products among poor groups;
- Build public understanding and political support for inclusive energy markets and the enabling environment reforms needed to support them;
- Design and deliver energy solutions with long-term development impact.

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