

# The Least Developed Countries Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Initiative for Sustainable Development

LDC REEEI 



## FRAMEWORK – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The *Least Developed Countries Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Initiative for Sustainable Development (LDC REEEI)* is an LDC-initiated, LDC-owned and LDC-driven effort to accelerate the harnessing of the renewable energy potential across least developed countries and to promote energy efficiency. Under the mandate of LDC Ministers, the LDC REEEI aims to support LDCs to achieve their development aspirations by addressing three overarching goals:

- **100% access to sufficient, affordable, modern and renewable energy by all citizens in LDCs by 2030;**
- **100% electricity from renewable energy sources in all LDCs by 2050 that caters to all needs of their citizens, social services and industries; and**
- **100% utilization of energy efficiency potentials along the value chain through full implementation of best practice measures and planning by 2040.**

At its core, the LDC REEEI is about energy for people-centered development. The Initiative recognizes the importance of energy for development and seeks to enable the LDCs achieve their Sustainable Development Goals, to align these efforts with the Paris Agreement's objectives, and to revitalize the Istanbul Programme of Action.

The Initiative is a strategic framework for driving transformative change across sectors and a platform for sharing experiences and disseminating knowledge to reach universal energy access and accelerate the transition to renewable energy and energy efficiency in all LDCs. The Initiative will consult multiple stakeholders in each country to help them develop their own solutions and action plans to leapfrog to modern renewable energy systems. The LDC REEEI will complement ongoing initiatives with tangible impacts on renewable energy and energy efficiency, while addressing areas that the existing initiatives do not. Primarily the Initiative will focus on developing and accelerating the implementation of national renewable energy and energy efficiency policies. The Initiative will also collaborate with regional, national, and local stakeholders to jointly identify opportunities to make energy services more accessible and affordable for productive uses, social services such as education and health, and to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

The LDC REEEI will assist countries in mobilizing and developing capacities, in formulating tailored policies and regulations, and in drawing lessons from a growing body of experience in deploying renewable energy technologies. The Initiative is predicated on solidarity and cooperation rather than competition: countries running ahead will share and support other LDCs to initiate actions aligned with LDC REEEI. The Initiative will also support country-led efforts to access climate dedicated funding such as the Global Environment Facility, LDC Fund, Adaptation Fund, Special Climate Fund, and Green Climate Fund.

The LDC REEEI is guided by a set of principles that outline the conditions and values under which the renewable energy transformation should be undertaken. Those seeking to partner with or have their activities recognized as aligned with the Initiative will need to subscribe to these principles:

- » **LDC leadership:** The Initiative is initiated, owned and driven by LDCs. It is designed to provide a unique platform for LDCs to affirm their priorities and visions, and direct non-LDC partners to support these visions.
- » **Country-driven:** Countries are sovereign in their choices and decisions. Recognizing that each country is unique, the LDC REEEI shall support different technologies and implementation models that are appropriate to the country context.
- » **LDC solidarity and cooperation:** The LDC REEEI is about LDCs supporting each other. Pioneering LDCs shall support other LDCs and foster cooperation rather than competition. The Initiative will also work towards reducing LDCs dependency by promoting cooperation with a wide range of partners.

- » **Equity at heart:** The Initiative is firmly grounded in the principle of equity at all levels. This includes the principle of ‘common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities’ at the international level, equity between LDCs, gender equity, and protect the rights of marginalized groups and indigenous peoples.
- » **Bottom-up, smart, distributed energy systems:** The Initiative shall actively promote smart, distributed and people-centered systems; and the application of innovative technologies that are appropriate for, and empower, communities.
- » **Meet the needs of local productive sectors:** The LDC REEEI will work towards ensuring energy systems cater to the needs of smallholding farms and micro, small and medium-sized enterprises; sectors that constitute the backbone of LDC societies and are essential for promoting local economies.
- » **Diversified ownership towards people- and community-centered energy systems:** By empowering citizens, communities, cooperatives, public institutions, and private entities to become power producers, the Initiative shall enhance energy democracy, local economic development and resilience.
- » **Participation and multi-stakeholder engagement:** The Initiative shall promote and facilitate the genuine involvement of local governments, citizens, communities, civil society, academia, private firms and media in the energy transition. New ways to foster engagement in decision-making processes and search for solutions shall be continuously explored and refined.
- » **South-South and North-South cooperation:** While the LDC REEEI is driven by LDCs, it is also a collaborative endeavor, and thus will stimulate partnerships with non-LDC countries and relevant institutions in the global North and South.
- » **Explicit efforts to transition to zero-carbon societies:** The Initiative was conceived and originates in the context of the international climate negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. While the Initiative goals, objectives and work areas are framed from an energy and development perspective, the climate dimension is an equally important motivation.

The activities of LDC REEEI will be guided and framed by eight focus areas, including: i) mapping and monitoring; ii) knowledge, capacity mobilization, building, and learning; iii) planning and policy; iv) funding and financing; v) multi-stakeholder engagement and people-centered/community energy systems; vi) equity, women and social/environmental safeguards; vii) Nationally Determined Contributions and national development plans; viii) public awareness, communication and outreach.

The LDC REEEI envisions a rapid paradigm shift in the global energy sector towards 100% renewable electricity, participatory and equitable energy systems. Renewable energy will become a source of income for the many, a way to empower communities, a tool for increasing resilience and breaking dependencies on other countries and big firms, an enabler of a flourishing of economic activity by local farms, local businesses and a functioning public sector. The Initiative will support LDCs in formulating long-term plans for people-centered and sustainable well-being for their citizens; harnessing energy to drive the productive sector; developing diversified, efficient and distributed energy systems for the future; and encouraging community ownership and energy cooperatives around the world.

The Initiative recognizes that while most LDCs are endowed with significant renewable energy source potentials, the majority of their people, productive sectors, and development efforts suffer from energy deficits. Increased access to energy has the potential to vastly improve the lives and livelihoods of populations, and the LDC REEEI regards basic energy services as a human right, which should be available on demand and delivered through the most efficient and affordable systems. The Initiative will therefore prioritize the needs of people currently without adequate access to modern, affordable, reliable and sustainable energy services. Further, the Initiative highlights the importance of going beyond a focus on increased household energy access, to more focus on the productive and social services sectors – driving economic development, creating new jobs, supporting the expansion of social and welfare services, and increasing resilience. This will require energy strategies that are

integrated into broader development strategies, building a mix of energy systems with both on and off-grid approaches, and must be underpinned by sound science, technology, financial and innovation policies and frameworks.

Although the LDCs are low emitters of greenhouse gases, they are especially vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change. Hence global decisive action on climate change is a top priority for the LDCs. Through LDC REEEI, LDCs can take international leadership by setting example and exerting moral pressure on countries that are slow to take action. The LDCs can furthermore take advantage of being ‘late-comers’, and jumpstart their renewable energy revolution when it is already cheap, and they have not expended large sums on expensive, conventional energy infrastructure.

This LDC-led Initiative builds on existing LDC political and decision-making processes. At the political level, the LDC REEEI will remain accountable to all LDC Ministers, and will operate under the guidance and supervision of a Steering Committee of LDC Ministers or their representatives comprising the countries involved in the Initiative, with participation by partners and stakeholders, as appropriate. At the technical level, the Initiative’s Coordinator will convene a Technical Expert Group comprising LDCs and international experts in renewable energy and related areas, to play a leadership role in developing, operationalizing and implementing the Initiative in practice. Activities at the political and technical level will be supported by a lean secretariat function connected with the existing LDC Secretariat, to ensure the most effective use of scarce resources and alignment with other LDCs activities.

The Initiative recognizes that while the energy challenges facing LDCs are enormous so too are the opportunities. LDCs will work together to embark on transformative action, set their own course, and take charge of their own future through pioneering a model of energy and development that is in accord with what both people and the planet need. The LDC REEEI can make a major contribution towards a future that delivers on aspirations for 100% energy access, renewable energy and best practices in energy efficiency and use – and in so doing helps to place us on path to a cleaner, fairer and more prosperous world for all.



Full versions of the LDC REEEI Framework document in English and French are available for download at [www.ldcreei.org](http://www.ldcreei.org)