



# REGIONAL MEETING ON SUSTAINABLE ENERGY

FOR ASIA-PACIFIC LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES  
KATHMANDU, NEPAL | 22-23 MARCH 2017



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## SESSION 1

### SETTING THE SCENE - SUSTAINABLE ENERGY INVESTMENT PLANS IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

***In this session, the role of the national investment prospectuses will be discussed together with the main challenges in accessing finance and scaling-up the current initiatives to accelerate energy transition in the least developed countries.***

Considering the ambitious global policy objectives on sustainable energy and the acute energy access gap in least developed countries (LDCs), rapid energy transition will require a strong and concerted effort from all stakeholders, including big investment and deployment of modern technologies. Unleashing the development potential of sustainable energy and expanding investment in the sector will require strong political will and critical rethinking by LDC decision-makers to set clear goals and timetables. These goals must be included in well-planned and coordinated energy strategies and investments plans with actionable programmes at the national level. LDC governments would benefit from creating policy and regulatory frameworks that promote private sector investment in a way that includes bottom-up approaches to benefit the poor and marginalized people.

Access to electricity in LDCs increased slightly, from 31.5 per cent of the population having access in 2010 to 34.5 per cent in 2012. Progress towards energy transition in the Asia-Pacific LDCs has been slower in recent years compared to the African LDCs, even though the initial access rates in general are higher in Asia-Pacific LDCs. From 2010 to 2012, energy access in Asia-Pacific LDCs grew from 52.8 per cent of the population having access in 2010 to 56.2 per cent in 2012. The rate of growth of electricity access has been higher for the rural population compared to the urban population, yet the gap between access to electricity between rural and urban remains vast: in 2012, only 44.0 per cent of the rural population had access compared to 90.0 per cent of the urban population.

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The majority of LDCs struggle with similar types of energy challenges that limit their economic potential and overall development. Access to electricity, in particular in rural areas of the LDCs, remains very limited due to lack of adequate infrastructure for electricity generation, transmission and distribution, limited institutional capacity and resource constrains with respect to the development of the energy sector and lack of scalable technology and know-how. In addition, the potential that various renewable energy solutions present to LDCs is not fully explored. In particular, vast opportunities will be created by ensuring modern energy to the rural population, women and marginalized groups. The impact on their health and education, poverty eradication and gainful employment opportunities will not only bring a transformative change in the lives of the people, but also create a sustainable basis of structural change in the economy.

Economic transformation that is sustainable and inclusive is directly related to increased access to modern energy. The focus should not only be on providing minimum amounts of electricity to households but ensuring access that promotes income generating activities and economic development. Renewable energy plays a vital role in the power generation in the Asia-Pacific LDCs, including using decentralized approaches, and this has increased sharply in recent years.

Countries in the Asia-Pacific region are eager to accelerate progress in achieving the SE4ALL targets and they have demonstrated strong national ownership and political will in this regard. Since the launch of the SE4All initiative in 2012, many LDCs have moved in this direction. The SE4All Initiative has provided support at country level in this respect in three stages:

- 1 Rapid assessments** including a situation analysis, stock taking and gap analysis;
- 2 Action Agenda:** providing a long-term vision which ensures the overall sector-wide coherence and synergy, and;
- 3 Investment Prospectus:** which provides an approach to operationalizing the Action Agenda by identifying and developing a set of implementable programs and projects, including their investment requirements, that can be presented to potential private and public investors. It integrates the technical, financial, and implementation requirements for achieving an intermediate goal and delineates the annual funding requirements for capital investments, technical assistance and capacity building over a given time period.

Currently 7 out of the 13 Asia-Pacific LDCs and Yemen have opted in to be part of the SE4All initiative. Four of these countries have prepared their rapid assessments. As regards the Country Action Agendas, four countries are currently in the process of preparing them. Similarly, one country, Myanmar, has finalised its investment prospectuses and three countries are currently developing them, including Bangladesh, Cambodia and Nepal.

Investment prospectuses by definition cover a short-to-medium-term horizon, as investment opportunities and market conditions can vary quickly. The investment prospectus would generally present an investment thesis (e.g. mid-sized renewables, energy efficiency, or mini-grids), but it will not need to be a "bankable document", rather a conversation starter for a variety of investment opportunities that will provide prospective financiers just enough (relatively standardized) information to decide whether or not they might want to liaise with specific project and/or program sponsors to get some further detail on the opportunity.

Therefore, this session will discuss how the development of investment prospectuses can kick start the energy transition by analyzing the investment requirements and identifying potential financing routes. Sharing experiences, success stories and lessons learned will help these countries in accelerating progress and therefore countries that have already prepared their investment prospectus will present their experiences.

## KEY QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS INCLUDE:



What have been the main challenges in preparing the investment prospectus? What are the key lessons learned from this process?



How have countries integrated investment prospectus into their medium and long-term national development planning? What are the guiding principles for success?



In the context of the Asia-Pacific LDCs, what are the most appropriate financial instruments in support of the implementation of sustainable energy projects?



What are the main challenges for accessing finance to improve access to sustainable energy?



How could the investment plans better incorporate a multi-stakeholder approach and engage with prospective financiers in regard to investment opportunities?