

Communiqué

Young Leaders in Energy Access

22 March 2017

We, Young Leaders in Energy Access, agree upon the necessity and urgency of providing clean energy access for all rural populations in the **short to medium term**.

We stress that access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy is a **pre-condition** for social and equitable development at local level and a great catalyst for job creation.

Youth plays a pivotal role in the change towards a more sustainable energy sector and we therefore underline the necessity to **empower** both African and European Youth. As 2017 has been declared by the African Union as the International Year of Youth, we highlight that this year provides a golden opportunity to continuously engage young generation in order to achieve the SEforALL goals.

We acknowledge that the responsibility to ensure a sustainable energy future for all is not that of the public sector alone, nor can it be achieved solely through public investments. Private sector, civil society and academia have a critical and central role to play in fostering sustainable energy programmes, projects, investments and policy frameworks.

Social aspects in order to empower civil society should be considered on a similar level as technical and financial aspects of projects.

We therefore welcome this timely opportunity to discuss how **multi-stakeholder partnerships** can help achieve the common goal of a sustainable energy future for everyone.

Recommendations:

1. Promote Youth Leadership

Youth should be given a substantial role in the decision-making process as they will be the ones dealing with the effects of decisions made today. All types of capacity building for youth is necessary to strengthen their effectiveness in solving energy access challenges.

2. Empower and Engage young Women and Girls

It is fundamental to recognise that women of all ages are in a position to drive demand, and catalyse the adoption and use of clean energy technologies at the household and community levels. Women should be empowered through and by entrepreneurship, financial and technical capacity building. Role of women in energy access in societies should be further recognised and valued.

3. Encourage Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships

Government (public institutions), private sector, academia, international development agencies, non-governmental organisations need to synergise their actions and involve youngsters in achieving the common SEforAll goals.

4. Invest in Local Education, Research and Development

There is a vital need to mobilise more investment in education, research, development and innovations for supporting local technologies. Collection and accessibility of local data should be encouraged in all projects.

5. Develop and Implement Effective Policy Frameworks

Develop and implement national energy policy frameworks which prioritise modern and sustainable energy. Presence of political will is necessary for successful implementation of those policies. The youth play a fundamental role as change makers. Additionally, fossil-fuel subsidies should be gradually faced out globally, as a mechanism to encourage sustainable energy developments.

6. Encourage Cross-Sectoral Cooperation

Energy is the root of development and inherently linked to job creation for youngsters – and other societal groups. Therefore, aligning energy access challenges with other development challenges is critical in achieving sustainable development goals.

Productive uses of energy must be considered in all projects as part of the sustainability of the project.

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