

# Press Release

Brussels, 9 September 2024

## ARE boosts its impact in Africa and Asia with new regional programme experts

The Alliance for Rural Electrification (ARE) is pleased to announce the addition of four regional programme experts to support the scale-up of the [CORE](#) and [GEAR](#) initiatives in Africa and Asia to turbocharge renewable electrification and energy efficiency. Catherine Mukobo joins for Central & West Africa, Eugenia Masvikeni for East & Southern Africa, Shaukat Ali for South Asia, and Natasha Allen for Southeast Asia.

With these strategic engagements, ARE reaffirms its commitment to advance progress on SDG-7 through the activation of markets for affordable electricity services, create local jobs and catalyse the green and just energy transition. The two initiatives emphasise skills development, technical assistance and project preparation to build the long-term sustainability of renewable electricity markets.

**The Cornerstone of Rural Electrification (CORE)** initiative was launched to help build the decentralised renewable energy (DRE) workforce across Africa and Asia while catalysing green job creation.

Through a training-of-trainers approach, CORE has already successfully trained 3,050 practitioners across 15 countries in Africa and Asia since its launch in 2022. With trainings held and planned for training institutions, as well as government entities in the Philippines, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Cape Verde, Pakistan and Myanmar, 2024 has so far already been a year of dedicated action on the ground. The addition of new regional programme experts to CORE is a testament to the growth path and the importance of the initiative to build the workforce of the future.

**Leslie Ann Ashburner from Transforming Energy Access – Learning Partnership (TEA-LP) said:** *"The ongoing collaboration between TEA-LP and CORE has provided significant capacity-building opportunities for TEA-LP partner universities. Many faculties need capacity building in the new and evolving fields of off-grid electricity and mini-grid design. Through CORE, our academics have received expert training on a needs basis and have also been connected with companies in the sector, to ensure*

*that curricula are real-world relevant. In September 2024, CORE will help to train over 30 lecturers from 12 countries at the TEA-LP Mini-Grids Training Workshop.”*

**The Grid Efficiency and Resilience Initiative (GEAR)** exists to improve electricity grid efficiency and resilience in emerging markets. Through technical assistance, policy support and derisking of projects in support of utilities and governments, GEAR increases the efficiency, reliability and resilience of electricity grids.

**Brian Dean, Director of Energy Transition at Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL) noted:** *“Along with the Mission Efficiency ecosystem, SEforALL is partnering with GEAR to spotlight the critical need for energy-efficient grids in advancing the energy transition. Together, we are attracting action on policies and investment to enable these efficient and resilient grids to deliver the electricity produced and seamlessly integrate renewable energy to reach those that need energy for their livelihoods.”*

Managed by ARE, both initiatives have demonstrated their effectiveness in overcoming critical barriers to advancing progress on SDG-7, especially in building long-term sustainability and resilience of markets. As a next step, ARE and its partners call for action to further scale up the two initiatives at international, regional and country levels. In particular, CORE and GEAR are looking for international funding partners, philanthropies and government entities that share our vision and would like to partner on joint activities.

**David Lecoque, CEO of ARE concluded:** *“Building on feedback from our Members across the globe, one of the major challenges to the massive deployment of clean energy technologies is finding and retaining the skilled workforce. The CORE and GEAR initiatives directly address this issue by training the workforce of the future with cutting-edge materials and modules, and providing experts. Through these initiatives, ARE demonstrates its unwavering commitment to supporting the private sector and advancing the clean energy industry.”*

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## Note to the editor

The Alliance for Rural Electrification ([ARE](#)) is an international business association that promotes a sustainable decentralised renewable energy industry for the 21st century. ARE activates markets for affordable energy services and creates local jobs and inclusive economies in Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America. ARE also enables improved energy access through business development support for its 200 Members along the whole value chain for decentralised renewable energy technologies.