

Discussion guidance note - Working Group 1
Country Level Implementation
[Room tbc]

General topic

The working group will discuss country level structures to implement in a coordinated way the actions to achieve the SEforALL/SDG7 objectives.

Working Group Context

Most African Countries have developed, or are actively developing their Action Agendas indicating the objectives and priority actions to achieve the SEforALL and SDG7 goals. Development partner support for the energy sector is increasing and a large number of bilateral and multilateral initiatives, programs, and projects to support African countries in their efforts towards universal energy access are being implemented, with actions that are either formally linked to the SEforALL / SDG7 processes, or that contribute nevertheless to the same end.

The political importance, and the social urgency, of interventions in the energy sector might lead to a crowded presence of developing partners, working with different institutions within the country (or different parts of the same institution) to support broadly similar scopes. In fact, both governments and development partners have incentives in multiplying the actions: the former to seek additional financing and technical support to improve the energy sector, the latter to increase their support to more countries, demonstrate their commitment to the sector and increase the visibility of their actions.

To overcome the resulting shortcomings and inefficiencies, a series of improvements in the handling of development assistance should take place at the country and at the development partner's level. With the Busan Declaration in 2011 (and subsequent developments) both countries and development partners agreed to a set of common principles to make development co-operation more effective, particularly: 1) ownership of development priorities by the countries; 2) a focus on results; 3) partnerships for development and 4) transparency and shared responsibility.

The SEforALL Action Agendas development process was fundamentally based on those principles, promoting country ownership, result-oriented actions, large partnership and an inclusive and transparent process. The implementation of the Action Agendas at the

local level is still at the beginning, and should find the practical modalities to continue the application of development co-operation best practices in terms of effectiveness, ownerships and results. The institutional set-up should be specifically suited and robust enough to support a sector that is seeing and will continue to see in the foreseeable future growing investments and a large gathering of stakeholders, sometimes with conflicting agendas.

The working group on country level implementation will have the task of elaborate actionable proposals for the implementing mechanisms for the SEforALL/SDG7 Actions at the country level. Notwithstanding the differences in country contexts and institutional settings, the working group will work on a shared vision between partners on the best options for implementing the action agendas, on the main characteristics that the implementation structure should have, and to the definition of a set of replicable, practical arrangements to be put in place in a set of pilot countries.

Previous Recommendations and implementation status

The previous workshop in 2016 recommended:

- To promote continuous partner coordination through the SE4All Action Agenda process at country level, participants recommended to formally establish the AA as a framework for SDG7 implementation at national level, (...) to involve the climate actors (particularly climate finance institutions such as the Green Climate Fund) more closely in the discussion on follow-up to SE4All AAs and IPs and establish a link between the INDC/NDCs most of which contain strong references to the energy sector and the Action Agendas in particular.
 - *The recommendation to establish the AA as a formal SDG7 implementation framework has been restated by the Specialized Technical Committee of the African Union in Lomé in March 2017. Linkages between AA and INDC/NDCs are not formalized, although the AA often refers to climate financing as one of the most desirable options and several INDC/NDCs refer to actions identified in the AAs.*
- With regards to national SE4All structure, participants recommended that national SE4All structures should be put in place to be able to work with the different partners/initiatives and lead on the coordination at country level. This should include the set-up of Secretariat/delivery unit (formally established and at least partially budgeted for) as coordination nucleus and the use of existing or set-up of dedicated inter-ministerial coordination committee on sustainable energy for all. It was also recommended the make best practices and success stories on national SE4All structures available through the SE4All Africa website.

- *Some countries (Kenya, Tanzania) are progressing in the implementation of the AA/IP and are designing the operational modalities of a SEforALL secretariat. There is no emerging consensus at this stage on the best practice to adopt. The Lomé declaration also recommended for African countries “to set-up national Coordination Units to facilitate the implementation of the SEforALL Action Agendas”.*

Working Group objectives

This roundtable discussion will discuss the following three themes:

- 1. Country level implementation/delivery mechanisms;** *what are the desirable characteristics of a country level implementation/delivery mechanism? What kind of institutional setting, coordination at the international and country level could be most effective and easily implementable? What are the best practices, including the ones experimented in other sectors, of delivery mechanisms that are capable to build on the comparative advantages of the different partners and leverage public support with private investments and creativity?*
- 2. Linkages to other country processes, e.g. NDCs;** *how is it possible to establish a stable link between the energy sector support and the climate processes derived from the COP 21 in Paris? What kind of setting and coordination between institutions could improve the attractiveness of climate finance for the achievement of SDG7/SEforALL scopes?*
- 3. Continuous stakeholder engagement;** *How can the inclusive process of stakeholder engagement developed during the Action Agenda process be continued, assuring the participation of all the sector of the society to the energy transformation of the countries? What are the best tools to include not only public and private sector, but also the civil society, the academia, the local communities to find solutions to the energy issues and maintain a good level of public attention on the sector?*

Expected outcomes

The working group will elaborate a set of **key recommendations** to be reported for discussions to the plenary session.