

# Summary of SDG7 Symposium

## Key Takeaways and Next Steps

Distinguished colleagues,  
Ladies and Gentleman

We are reaching the end of this very interesting event in which we had the opportunity to discuss so many interesting issues.

It was practically impossible for my colleagues at the Division for Sustainable Development and for me to produce in such a short time a comprehensive summary of this symposium which could capture all your valuable thoughts and recommendations discussed in the last three days.

Nevertheless, last night we prepared a basic list of key messages, most of them rather general, but that we could use as the basis of a more comprehensive summary document to be sent to you soon and to which we could incorporate your additional comments and ideas.

I would like to start by thanking the Norwegian Research Council, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway and SINTEF for their extraordinary support, kind generosity and for hosting us during the last three days in this beautiful city of Oslo.

The event counted with participation of around 100 people (on and off), from 30 developing and developed countries from all regions of the world and from most stakeholders including government representatives, private sector, practitioners, financing organizations, academia, NGOs, etc. Representatives from international organizations were also present including from 18 UN organizations.

Our preliminary list of basic key messages includes the following:

1. We need to continue acknowledging that Energy is a means rather than an end and that Energy is an indispensable factor for achieving most of the sustainable development goals.

2. It is clear that considerable progress has been made to satisfy the Sustainable Development Goal on Energy – SDG 7, but that at the current pace of progress, we will not be able to meet the specific targets of this goal by 2030.
3. The SDGs are defined, in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as indivisible and need to be taken in an integrated manner; therefore, in order to accelerate progress we have to promote an integrated approach on SDG7 that maximizes synergies across all sectors.
4. A more comprehensive set of indicators are necessary to effectively review and monitor SDG7 and its targets. To this end, complimentary indicators may be required especially to monitor the interlinkages with other SDGs.
5. Much more effort is necessary in the area of sustainable cooking solutions; nearly 3 billion people still do not have access to clean cooking fuels causing 4 million deaths annually.
6. Considerable progress has been made in electrification in the last few years, such as in India, nevertheless, in some parts of the world population growth continues to outpace progress, especially in sub Saharan Africa.
7. Participants recognized a need for more concrete understanding of some energy terminologies including what defines access and renewable energy.
8. Innovative business models (such as variations of mobile payments and pay-as-you-go) are critical to further dissemination of distributed energy programs. Promotion of income generating activities and other productive uses clearly enhance business sustainability and also empowers communities.
9. In the last years new additional installed electric generating capacity based on renewable technologies is now greater than the capacity being added based on fossil fuels. Extraordinary cost reductions have been observed in renewable energy technologies and renewable energy are now, in some

regions, very competitive with traditional energy options. This is creating worldwide optimism for an accelerated penetration of renewables everywhere.

10. Some participants, in particular practitioners from developing countries, noted that there are still strong barriers hindering the adoption of renewable energy; in particular with respect to: finance, capacity building, affordability, import tariffs, product certification and standardization and the cost of technology transfer.
11. We know that financing SDG7 is still a challenge, especially in developing countries. The capital needed exists and we must work towards de-risking energy projects in order to unlock investment flows.
12. Despite the optimism on significantly increasing renewable energy use, it will still be necessary to overcome many challenges, such as the continued reliance on solid unsustainable biomass in developing countries.
13. Increased communication among the different sectors is critical to overcoming the sectoral “silos” and to implementing a cross sectoral response that is needed to accelerate clean energy transitions.
14. Stable policy, regulatory frameworks and a well-informed governments are critical issues indispensable to attract partnerships and investment for clean energy technologies.
15. Energy efficiency remains an underestimated and underutilized opportunity. Much more awareness creation and efforts are required to realize its potential across the many sectors of the economy including transport, buildings, residential and industry.
16. We must spread awareness of the untapped potential of energy efficiency and monetize its benefits for decision makers. Regulation and

incentives from the government are needed to accelerate energy efficiency programs.

17. In many parts of the world women are disproportionately impacted by the lack of modern energy services. Gender responsive policies and considerations must be a priority and should be mainstreamed at all levels.
18. Innovative financing mechanisms (such as North-South partnerships) need to be enhanced and put into practice to support the development of energy projects that lack sufficient financing to become a reality, especially in poor countries.
19. Regional forums on sustainable development as well as other relevant international forums such as the Vienna Energy Forum, the World Health Assembly, and UNFCCC events provide important platforms to advance SDG7 and its interlinkages with other SDGs.

## On the next steps

1. Participants underscored the **importance of the in-depth review of the SDG7 at HLPF on Sustainable Development in 2018** as a once-in-a-four-year global milestone not to be missed.
2. Participants welcomed the global **preparatory meeting** in support of the in-depth review of the SDG7 to be held in Hong Kong SAR, China on 10-12 February 2018.
3. Participants endorsed and support the proposed Policy Briefs and a “Summary for Policy Makers” report that should be developed by multi-stakeholders through inclusive consultations, **coordinated by DESA as the Secretariat for HLPF**.

4. Participants welcomed the establishment of an ad hoc informal multi-stakeholder technical advisory group on SDG7 to help guide the preparations toward the HLPF 2018 and beyond.

**Thank you very much.**