'Transforming Energy Access: From 'new Temples for old Gods' to integrated & systematic change imperatives in an Age of structural inequality'

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Transforming Energy Access: New Temples for Old Gods?

- Renewable, Green and low-carbon energy systems have a unique role to play in enhancing energy access to disadvantaged households and communities through providing alternative low-cost, off-grid electricity through diverse platforms, such as Solar, Hydro, Bio-gas, and mini-grid systems, for heating, lighting, cooking, etc.
- However, these alternative energy systems are facing immense challenges to deliver truly accessible and empowering energy access for people and communities in the midst of rapidly changing socio-cultural, socio-economic, political and technological contexts.
- The global framework of the post-2015 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) creates a critical opportunity to reach consensus on a vision for transformative development that is science-based and applicable inclusively and equitably. The SDG's framework also shows that the framing of transformative development (including energy access) discourses, practices and mechanisms, which have been heavily predicated on masculine, euro-centric, and elitist perspectives, have not served societies and communities well.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
1 NO POVERTY
2 ZERO HUNGER
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
4 QUALITY EDUCATION
5 GENDER EQUALITY
6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION
7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES
11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
13 CLIMATE ACTION
14 LIFE BELOW WATER
15 LIFE ON LAND
16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Transforming Energy Access: Challenges on the road to success

- Donor-dependency and the ‘white-elephant’ syndrome
- Policy, Politics and the Politicisation of energy access in developing countries
- Gender inclusion and socio-cultural empowerment - African Proverb: ‘*You cannot shave a man’s head in his absence’*
- Governance, Trust and the ‘Gaming’ of energy access
- Sustaining Private Sector involvement
- Power dynamics – who decides, who benefits and who profits????
- Impact/benefits assessment – do we measure what truly matters to the poor, or do we measure what we value??

Transforming Energy Access: Success Pathways

- Focus on addressing the needs of the excluded through insightful, comprehensive, multi-disciplinary and empowering market intelligence gathering of quantitative…but equally important…qualitative data!!
- Transitioning from Donor-dependent poor practices…to smart, pre-testing of marketable and business savvy operating and delivery models to enhance impacts.
- Designing energy access solutions with analytical frameworks that fully incorporate integrated eco-systems approaches and methodologies, in order to deliver multi-level socio-economic benefits and social transformation.
- Innovative and risk-sharing funding models with project partners having ‘skin in the game’, and thus, vested in more impactful, sustainable and transformative outcomes for poor households and communities..

Transforming Energy Access: Where to from here?

- To make way for new diverse and accessible narratives that speak to a wider knowledge base and resonate with the lived experiences of *all* in society across intersectional boundaries.
- Tackling the 'how to' challenges of unequal power relations and structural dominance...
- Driven by the realisation of lessons learnt showing the way forward as moving away from the notion of delivering change through projects, but rather through processes, a multi-level framework, which requires shared solidarity – in essence, 'co-operation' within the field...
- Engendering, enabling and sustaining critical debate and dialogue in a multi-stakeholder, multi-disciplinary paradigm…

Transforming Energy Access: Quo Vadis LCEDN?

1. Local Level Energy Governance
2. How to bring in those sectors/countries who are not here? (UK diaspora? Pakistan?)
3. Mapping our networks -
   - What do you have?
   - Who are you in contact with?
   - What are your burning issues?
4. Mapping the impact of our networks
   - a. What is the best way to do this?
   - b. What metrics do donors need?
   - c. How we can efficiently measure, e.g. auto analysis
5. How do we engage with the DFID TEA Programme to best support this?