

With my pleasure to address the “Questions for Discussion” indicated below, from our country's perspective as well as from the region's perspective.

1- What are the commonalities and differences of the approaches?

2- Different objectives, different circumstances: finding a common ground?

3-How can the Regional Commissions collaborate?

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1. What are the commonalities and differences of the approaches?

- Access to energy is essential to addressing the problems that cause poverty. After food and shelter, energy is one of the fundamentals of modern society.
- The quality of and access to energy services in many countries are insufficient or declining, the costs of energy services are rising, and (GHGs) from the energy sector are increasing.
- Primary energy consumption in Arab countries has steadily increased over the last decade at an average rate of 6.3%, with a notable acceleration in the last five years of that decade.

- Arab countries have realized the seriousness of this prevailing unsustainable energy situation in the region and have recently embarked on different programs and actions that consider energy efficiency and renewable energy an important part of their economic development plans.
- Lack of energy services aggravates the cycle of extreme poverty for the concerned social groups, especially in the rural areas which has an adverse impact on basic issues such as:-
“food security, water supply, health care, social services education, communication and overall development”.

- As much as 65% of the population in one Arab country and 48% in another one are not supplied with electricity, mainly in the rural areas.
- RESs are gradually becoming cost-competitive in comparison to conventional resources. They offer a way to reduce the net carbon intensity of the energy sector, improve energy security, and encourage economic development.
- Integrating renewables into the global energy mix will be important as future energy systems are optimized both on- and off-grid.

2- Different objectives, different circumstances: finding a common ground?

- SE4All is considered as a top priority because it is central to all aspects of sustainable development indicating the conditions for reaching the targeted objectives and the barriers that need to be overcome.
- Energy resources are unequally distributed amongst Arab Countries and, in most cases, used unsustainably.
- Arab Countries are using more than twice the amount of energy that European countries use to produce the same amount of Gross Domestic Product (GDP); indicating a tremendous potential for energy efficiency in the region. This unsustainable trend is a serious threat to the region's economic and social development goals.

- For Arab Countries that are already net importers of energy, current growth rates in energy consumption will increase their vulnerability to international energy price fluctuations, eventually leading to a much weakened energy security situation for them.
- For Arab Countries with economies relying on revenues from fossil fuel exports, a substantial reduction in hydrocarbon products destined for export will result in a dramatic fall in potential revenues, which can constitute a major risk to their on-going development.

3-How can the Regional Commissions collaborate

- Across the world there are 1.3 billion people without access to electricity. International action is needed to change this. It is predicted that by 2035, unless action is taken, around one billion people will still be living without electricity.
- To end extreme poverty and build shared prosperity, we have to confront climate change. The poor are the first to be impacted by climate change and suffer most from its effects. We will need clean, efficient, and reliable sources of energy to reduce CO₂ emissions and create a sustainable future for all and finding solutions to global warming.

- Catalyzing global actions around three clear objectives to be achieved by 2030:
 - (1) Ensuring universal access to modern energy services;
 - (2) Doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency;
 - (3) Doubling the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.
- Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) means everyone will have access to electricity, and all homes will have safe and smoke-free cooking and heating. Our goal is to ensure that by 2030 over a third of our energy worldwide is from clean, renewable sources — while also boosting energy efficiency.
- Sustainable energy is the golden thread that connects poverty eradication, equitable economic growth and a healthy environment.

Key Answers:-

- Ensuring universal access to modern energy services requires mobilization of public and private resources.
- Develop regional and international standards or other normative instruments throughout the energy system as a tool for governments to accelerate the transition to a sustainable energy system and to allow the private sector both to invest and to benefit from uniform standards.
- A capacity building hub called the “Specialized Training, Education and Experiential Resources.

- Strengthen capacities for long-term, strategic energy planning.
- Proper pricing of (GHGs) and other pollutant emissions should be considered to enable accelerated uptake of energy efficiency, and renewable and clean energy technology.
- Deploy policy incentives, standards, and regulations to induce desired change.
- Implement policies that enable the required energy transition.
- Provide incentives for energy-efficiency measures.
- Create structural, institutional and regulatory framework conditions that enable substantial investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy throughout the value chain.
- Encourage project developers and industry to exchange information on projects with financial institutions.

- Support research and development and the commercial introduction of new technology, capital, and management skills to support needed transitions.
- Encourage local manufacturing of energy-efficient and cleaner energy equipment that contributes to cost-effective job creation.
- Promote international, regional and national collaboration on long-term research and development of energy efficient technology and knowledge exchange on lessons learned about large scale deployment of renewable energy capacity.

- Encourage interconnection infrastructure projects among countries with complementary energy resources as a cost effective way to enhance mutual energy security and stabilize energy systems.
- Engage in dialogue with financial institutions to explore ways to align investment incentives with the objectives of the SE4All initiative.
- Create structural, institutional and regulatory framework conditions that enable investment throughout the value chain that reward efficient provision of energy services rather than use of energy resources.
- Promote efficient, net low carbon projects in all economic sectors.

- Establish energy statistics programs that monitor and report key energy production and consumption variables.
- Collect data on energy production and consumption patterns consistent with the desired future energy system.
- Undertake long-term planning for national energy options based on a sustainable development perspective, integrating increased uptake of energy efficiency and renewable energy, encouraging careful management of energy resources, ensuring access to modern energy services, and addressing the needs of energy consumers and energy suppliers.

Key Points

- The United Nations is working to help Member States secure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy, in line with the Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) initiative of the United Nations Secretary-General, and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as well as the carbon footprint of the energy sector. Achieving these outcomes is essential if the world is to develop sustainably.
- Energy Efficiency in most countries needs to improve more quickly. Improving energy efficiency is one of the most cost-effective options for meeting growing energy demand in most countries. It contributes to energy security, a better environment, improved quality of life, and economic well-being. **There is an urgent need for a stronger engagement and commitment from the countries policy makers to promote an up scaling of the different actions and a notable acceleration in the pace of their implementation, involving all concerned stakeholders.**
- Together we have the power to redefine our relationship with the planet and lay the foundations for a life of dignity for all.