Roadmap for Civil Society Partnership

Prepared for the Secretary General’s High Level Group on Sustainable Energy for All

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The Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL) Initiative recognised the crucial and complementary role that civil society can play in delivering universal energy access, doubling renewables and doubling improvement in the rate of increase of efficiency by 2030 in the Framework for Action adopted by the HLG in January 2012.

This was reinforced at the Rio +20 SE4ALL HLG meeting where the Secretary General stressed the importance of civil society as the ‘third pillar’ alongside Government and Business actors.
This Roadmap for Civil Society Partnership, created at the request of SE4ALL co-Chair, Kandeh Yumkella. All 4 co-author organisations are strongly committed to SE4All and were happy to respond to the request.

The Roadmap provides initial recommendations for operationalizing the HLG’s commitment to mainstreaming civil society in ways that complement, augment and strengthen the SE4All action agenda and delivery process moving forward.

Civil Society encompasses a broad range of issues, regions and scales. Harnessed and mobilised effectively, the collective appetite and expertise which civil society can contribute is game-changing. Civil society engagement, both North and South, and particularly South-South, is a prerequisite for the success of the Initiative.

The goal of this Roadmap is to put in place the process and structures needed for civil society to broaden and deepen its commitments to specific actions that will help deliver the SE4ALL objectives.
Who are Civil Society in the SE4All context?

Organisations encompassing associations, cooperatives, foundations, trade unions, indigenous groups, faith-based groups, academia, NGOs and community-based organisations that:

• Work on securing energy access for all, particularly ensuring that the poorest and most marginalized communities are included in and benefit from energy access
• Advocate for and work on renewable energy and energy efficiency
• Bring to the table a wide range of issues that ensure that energy is truly sustainable from a social, environmental and economical perspective, with due regard to: inclusivity, gender, rights and governance, community participation, poverty alleviation and biodiversity conservation
• Represent diverse regions, including the South and North, as well as operating from global and regional to local and community scales
Examples of Civil Society Successes

Hundreds of civil society organisations are already working around the world in the areas of energy access, energy efficiency and renewable energy both directly and with other like-minded institutions. Examples include (but are by no means limited to):

1. **NOT FOR PROFIT PARTNERSHIPS:** ACE, Barefoot College, CONAMAQ, Earth Spark International, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, IBEKA, IIASA, Interfaith Power & Light, ITUC, Mali Folk Centre, National Association of Professional Environmentalists, NUMSA, SKDRDP, Solar Women of Totogalpa, Vasudha Foundation, We Care Solar, WWF...

2. **SOCIAL BUSINESS PARTNERS:** SELCO, Grameen Shakti, Solaris Mobile Charger, Barefoot Power, INDIGO, Husk Power Systems, Toyola Energy Limited, UGASTOVE Limited...

3. **HYBRID NETWORKS:** ARE, AREA, Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves, GVEP, GOGLA, IEEE, TERI, UN Foundation Practitioner Network...
The ‘added value’ of Civil Society – Part 1

As the Initiative moves into operational phase, civil society can make a unique contribution to delivering Sustainable Energy for All and should be engaged as an equal partner on the basis that we:

• Play a pivotal role in the Secretary General’s vision of achieving Sustainable Energy For All across the 3 focus areas

• Engage with the most marginalised communities and particularly with women as agents of sustainable development

• Look beyond technical and social barriers to find effective alternative, low-cost energy solutions that may challenge ‘mind set’ and conventional approaches

• Focus on decentralised household, community and enterprise systems as well as mini/micro-grids where commercial, business and government models may not find traction

• Build confidence and capacity on quality installation, operation, maintenance, fabrication and innovation at grassroots level

• Work with, and not for, communities who have no access to sustainable energy and can operationalize relevant ‘for profit’ and ‘not for profit’ approaches
As outlined in the SE4All Framework for Action, civil society can further add value by:

• Identifying, advocating for, and influencing the design and implementation of policies that support the objectives of SE4All, including promoting effective community-led models and highlighting the role women can play

• Researching & developing sustainable energy technologies for achieving access as well as uptake of renewables and energy efficiency, spreading innovation and best practice

• Building networks to promote monitoring and evaluation and ensure transparency and accountability across all 3 pillars

• Fostering networks of community-based businesses and social entrepreneurs to accelerate spread, progress and impact

• Capacity building, training and facilitation of exchange of knowledge, skills and practices to other civil society actors, government, and the business sector

• Creating like-minded partnerships among communities, government and business
Key Recommendations to SE4ALL - Policy

• Government and UN agencies in opt in countries must raise their effort to engage with civil society organizations working on the delivery of low cost energy services, poverty alleviation, renewables and efficiency. This will help shape best practice strategies to ensure inclusion of the most marginalised people and women in energy access planning and service delivery for household and related community and enterprise applications.

• Community input into the design of solution sets and broader decision-making is crucial, with an awareness that, in some contexts, decisions may be made at the individual level as well as in a community context.

• The primary goal of expanding energy access should be sustainable social and economic development with a view to meeting minimum energy needs at household, community and productive enterprise level in a “reliable, affordable, economically viable, and socially and environmentally acceptable manner” (as per the Rio outcome document).

• Public-private-people partnerships can operate successfully in the policy space and should be actively encouraged, noting civil society’s proven track record in helping to design and translate policy in ways which matter to poor people.
Key Recommendations to SE4ALL - Practice

- Investing in the capacity of local people, as both users as suppliers of energy services, can help to accelerate and sustain progress on energy access. **Capacity building at local level - to develop technical skills and advocacy capability - should be prioritized, with the inclusion and promotion of women at all levels** to increase the capacity and competence of poor communities to develop sustainable energy services to meet their needs.

- **All solutions have their merits: grid extension, mini-grids, micro-grids and decentralized options will all be required if we are to achieve Sustainable Energy for All by 2030.** Civil Society’s experience of the application of these technologies, in often challenging contexts, should be recognized and harnessed accordingly at the outset of country level planning.

- **Providing the energy services which poor people need will require agreement on, and usage of, a definition of the minimum acceptable level of ‘access’** (which may differ from current conventions).

- **The sustainability of the solutions introduced will, in part, depend upon establishing and agreeing standards** for procurement and service and maintenance, as well as ensuring that adverse impacts on land, food, water, biodiversity and social equity are avoided or mitigated.

- **Finance streams need to be made available for those who cannot access international investment funding;** e.g., End-user financing, working capital for non-English speaking SMEs.

- **Country planning and that of donors, private actors and multi-laterals should actively reflect the urgent need for finance for options based on the IEA modeling of 60% of the solution set being mini-grid and off-grid systems to reach universal energy access by 2030.**
Concrete Actions Needed

For Sustainable Energy for All to harness the critical value add of strong civil society engagement a clear and considered programme of engagement, as well as donor financial support, is required in both the short and long term.

This Roadmap is intended to create the conditions necessary to mobilise Civil Society and encourage new commitments, as well as engagement with existing SE4ALL commitments, as part of the Action Agenda.

The recommendations below represent tangible, deliverable and meaningful actions to involve civil society actors effectively at an international and country level over the next six months. These immediate actions will need to be buttressed through inclusion into the longer term plan, and adequately resourced to put them into practice.
SE4ALL International Structure
Recommendations - Immediate steps (by Dec 2012)

1) **Representation of civil society on the 'Advisory Council' and 'Steering Committee' of SE4ALL** – Ring-fence at least 30% of positions for civil society representatives with a commitment to constructive partnership and a distinguished track record of demonstrable impact in the fields of access, renewables or efficiency. Ensure funded representation across issues and scales, with appropriate consideration to gender representation and regional balance.

2) **Civil Society secondees** – Engage civil society, through secondment, with 1-2 individuals invited to be seconded into the Executive Team with the remit of enhancing Civil Society engagement with the Initiative and brokering the partnerships needed for maximizing civil society value-add.

3) **Civil Society Co-Chair** – to demonstrate genuine partnership and ‘third pillar’ status, create a civil society Co-Chair position in the ‘Steering Committee’ (alongside private sector and government/UN agency).

4) **Civil Society focal point in Executive Team** – Ensure one member of the new Executive Team has explicit responsibility for focusing on international and in-country civil society engagement in delivery and impact/evaluation, including the collection and communication of data on civil society’s current and potential contributions to all 3 objectives.

5) **Finance to enable action** – Encourage donors and other sources of finance to allocate the resource required to enable civil society to engage and provide services at national level.
SE4ALL National engagement recommendations – Immediate steps (by Dec 2012)

1) **Outline in-country engagement structure/process** – Develop a clear set of guidelines to share with each opt-in country, encouraging some consistency of approach for civil society participation (for example – engagement with the National Implementation Plan process and subsequent delivery, and M&E). Use these guidelines and this Civil Society Road Map as the basis for discussion involving civil society organisations with a track record in energy access, renewables or efficiency, as well as others focused on development in-country.

2) **Civil society platforms at country-level** - Provide resources to support civil society organizations in opt-in countries to create an independent platform for engagement with all national SE4All actors. The mandate of this platform should include representation of civil society voice in stock taking, strategic planning, impact assessment, designing innovative tools for data collection, supporting implementation and developing systems for ensuring accountability.

3) **‘Pilot programmes’ of intensive civil society activity** – select 3-5 of the priority opt in countries to trial a funded awareness-raising/advocacy/engagement/capacity building programme to demonstrate vibrant examples of civil society engagement and establish the model and process of engagement that works best for civil society and SE4ALL for other opt-in countries to build upon/replicate.
In the short to medium term, civil society across all opt in countries can make the following contributions to SE4ALL:

- Work with all actors on the development of a National SE4ALL Implementation Plan and identification of the specific roles and tasks of civil society organizations in that context (from policy development to capacity building and delivery)
- Map the needs in-country to help ensure that access is defined and delivered in ways that reflect the requirements of poor communities
- Develop targets, timelines and scalable models for delivery of agreed outcomes
- Design and implementing innovative and appropriate monitoring and evaluation systems at country level to feed back into the global level
- Expand existing civil society capacity to deliver progress on renewables, efficiency and access, realizing communities’ right to energy and to live just and dignified lives.
Securing Civil Society Commitment

While many civil society organizations are already committed in their on-going work to the three objectives of SE4All, the tangible steps outlined in this roadmap are likely to result in improved trust in the implementation process. This should generate an environment more conducive to equal partnership, leading to an enhanced quality of civil society engagement overall, fostering increased levels of commitments made to help meet the three objectives and the goal of achieving “sustainable energy for all”.

The proposed changes to structure and process would be a welcome first step towards building a more meaningful engagement with civil society.
• **End of July** – Submit Civil Society Action Plan to Co-Chairs of HLG

• **late August / early September** – Physical meeting between co-Chairs and authors of this road map (Barefoot College, IUCN, Practical Action, UN Foundation) to explore the ways in which the above recommendations can be built into the operational phase of SE4ALL post-September. In parallel, authors will share road map more broadly with civil society networks in North and South to explore traction, buy-in and suggestions for improvement.

• **Late September** – Civil Society Road Map to be publicised at UNGA-related events on SE4ALL (organise civil society sessions with the aim of: providing a platform for the Initiative to acknowledge the inputs from civil society consultations, demonstrate that civil society is recognised as the ‘third pillar’ and provide clarity on the practical ways in which civil society, North and South, can engage with the operational phase of the Initiative)

• **September to January** – Commence ‘Phase II’ of civil society engagement focusing more explicitly on the processes and products required to generate more, and more ambitious, commitments from CSOs at international and national level

At both national and international level, CSOs are eagerly awaiting detail of how the Secretary General’s commitment to civil society as SE4ALL’s ‘third pillar’ will translate into practice.

Please consider us partners in helping to shape and deliver a programme which both harnesses and enhances civil society expertise and appetite in our shared goal to deliver Sustainable Energy for All.