

 Sustainable Energy

INFORSE

International Network for Sustainable Energy



Briefing on Pro-Poor Low Carbon Development



Background and Partners

The project “Promoting Pro-Poor Low-Carbon Development Strategies” has been implemented since 2014 aiming to strengthen civil society networks and initiatives in East and West Africa, South Asia, and Latin America supporting national and regional climate campaigns focusing on promoting Pro-Poor Low-Carbon Development. The partners in this project are SustainableEnergy, Climate Action Network International, International Network for Sustainable Energy (INFORSE), Climate Action Network Latin America, Climate Action Network South Asia, Climate Action Network Uganda, Haiti Survie, FIDES, TaTEDO, ENDA-Energy, Mali Folkecenter, Development Alternatives, Janathakshan, Integrated Sustainable Energy and Ecological Development Association (INSEDA), All India Women Conference (AIWC), IDEA, and other associated partners.

Key findings and recommendations from this project are presented in this briefing.



Low carbon development and ending poverty go hand in hand

In this briefing, we argue that low carbon development and ending poverty have to go hand in hand, that renewable energies bear huge development opportunities if the right framework conditions are fulfilled, and that the provision of bold international support is decisive for poor and developing countries to become part of a just transition. Our respective asks for the Paris package are provided and lessons learnt from case studies are shared.

Keeping global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, ending poverty, and transforming the world towards sustainable, equitable, and climate resilient development are the key challenges of the 21st century. They are closely inter-related and one cannot be solved without the other.

By acknowledging this evident truth, backed by science and everyday experience, and building on the Agenda 2030 with the Sustainable Development Goals as adopted recently by all countries, COP 21 in Paris is the political moment in history to agree on a long-term goal, which operationalizes the temperature goal to provide the necessary signal for state action and investors. Therefore, we call for:

- > **Global economic transformation and 100 per cent renewable energies by 2050 at the latest and providing access to sustainable energy for all by 2030; and,**
- > **Technology and Finance as means of implementation and Capacity-building support to be provided by developed to developing countries to ensure achievement of long-term goal**

Low-carbon development is risk prevention: Keeping oil, gas and coal in the ground is a scientifically proven necessity to avoid catastrophic climate change, which if missed, would trigger even more poverty, health issues, and deprive future generations from their development opportunities.

Low-carbon strategies are a driver for development: The accelerated transformation of global economic order to go low-carbon is a great development opportunity, ensuring livelihoods, increasing income, providing jobs, improving health, education and human security, and protecting ecosystems and species from extinction.

Energy demand is expected to significantly rise in developing countries, given that 1.1 billion people still lack access

to reliable and affordable electricity, and that 2.9 billion still heat and cook with traditional biomass¹. While alternatives to fossil energy have become much more viable in recent years and many developing countries have important geographical advantages, most countries still have a long way to go before renewable energy access to all becomes a reality. The reduction in emissions footprint of industries, traffic and buildings in these countries is also urgent due to both economic and health concerns. Unsustainable infrastructural investments will lead to lock-in effects for decades due to their long-term nature. Even when per capita greenhouse gas emissions are very low in most rural areas of developing countries, the population there still benefits from low carbon solutions, compared to traditional development pathways: access to sustainable renewable energy can be faster, cheaper, cleaner and safer if building on local energy resources such as micro-hydro, biomass, wind, or the sun. We therefore argue that:

- > **Low-carbon development is a huge opportunity and can mobilize many developmental co-benefits if done the right way.**

Low-carbon technologies, business models and approaches have great potential for innovation. They can shift the power and will lead to new winners and losers in the economy, in-between countries, and within societies. Even when developing countries have a huge potential for renewables, it cannot be taken for granted that they are not deprived and excluded from benefits again. The majority of developing countries need special attention and support to better benefit from low carbon opportunities. Key requirements for a just energy transition are increased knowledge dissemination, technology transfer, financial support and capacity building. It depends on political will, economic investment, social and environmental safeguards and broad public support. If these factors are provided, the transformation to full decarbonization in the long-term can be achieved, using low carbon development strategies or plans as a useful approach, as anchored in the UNFCCC.² Therefore, we call for:

- > **Frameworks and international support for low carbon development plans to be ecologically sound, human rights based, socially and gender-inclusive, and nationally appropriate.**

¹ <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/energy>

² Low Carbon Development Plans or Strategies are rooted in the UNFCCC: In Cancún at COP 16 (2010) it was decided that developed countries are obligated to elaborate low carbon development strategies or plans (Decision 1./16, para 45) while developing countries are encouraged to do so (1./16, para 65).

Asks on the Paris Agreement to boost pro-poor Low Carbon Development

1. Long-Term Mitigation Goal to phasing out all fossil fuel emissions and phasing in 100% renewable energy with sustainable energy access for all by 2030 at the latest.

2. National Low Carbon Development strategies of all Parties in line with Agenda 2030 to ensure sustainable, climate resilient development and higher HDI.

All Parties must be required to submit their National Low Carbon Development Plans not later than 2020. Developing countries must be supported with the means of implementation to develop and fulfill their Plans.

Further technical guidance on development and implementation of these plans must be provided in future COP decisions. These should include:

> A request for countries to include a sector by sector analysis that reflects changes over time in physical infrastructure to inform decision makers about the technology requirements and costs of different emissions reduction options.

> An estimated budget to operationalize the National Low Carbon Development Plans. The budget should be synchronized with the 5-year cycles under the Paris Agreement.

> Indicative decadal goals up to 2050 within National Low Carbon Development Plans to provide a trajectory for actions and targets.

> Provision of underlying assumptions and methodologies used to develop the national Low Carbon Development plan.

3. Fairness and equity as underlying principles of pro-poor National Low Carbon Development plans in terms of both own action, and the provision of international support

Based on the CAN Equity Reference Framework we call for a dynamic differentiation approach for operationalizing the Convention's equity principles in the Low Carbon Development process in order to support an ambitious and just transition, taking into account different national circumstances and changing levels of economic development. In terms of financial, technology and capacity building support for the elaboration and implementation of just and pro-poor National Low Carbon Development plans, developed countries and countries in a position to do so, considering historic responsibility, current capacity and evolving capabilities, are required to support those countries in need.

4. Alignment of the Paris Agreement with the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development

Due recognition and reference to the Agenda 2030 is important to ensure coherence and to mobilize synergies between the Agenda 2030 and the expected climate agreement. The Agenda 2030 with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals on top of 169 targets, of which more than 50 are related to climate change, should become a reference of the climate agreement and of any national Low Carbon Development Strategy. This is in particular true for Goal 13 specifically urging action on climate change and its impacts when fighting global poverty, inequality and injustice.

Lessons learned from case studies of the project “Promoting pro-poor Low Carbon Development strategies”

Through this project, covering developing countries from Africa, Asia and Latin America, a number of lessons learned have been identified hereafter, building evidence base for our asks and also aiming at providing helpful conclusions and recommendations not only for stakeholders in the project focal countries but also from other countries.

1 Low carbon development advocacy in India

This project by the All India Women Conference (AIWC), Integrated Sustainable Energy and Ecological Development Association (INSEDA), CAN South-Asia (CANSA)³ with Development Alternatives aims to achieve the acknowledgement of stakeholders and policy makers that low carbon development (LCD) is the alternative future pathway. It generates innovative knowledge and makes information accessible. Through advocacy it promotes the international climate talks to play a catalyst role by providing instruments for accessing finance, technology and capacity. The project contributes to an enhanced momentum in India towards LCD with ambitious national renewable energy, energy efficiency, and sustainable energy access targets.

What are lessons learned?

- > The narrative for LCD in India needs to include co-benefits for people in raising their Human Development Index (HDI) and pulling the poor out of poverty;
- > Only ambitious targets for renewable energy, energy efficiency and energy access are not sufficient by themselves, and also require a clear roadmap to be annexed with them;
- > Policy interventions need to move beyond electricity generation and also harvest LCD potential from transport, construction and infrastructure, and waste management.

Recommendations to governments:

- > National LCD visions and strategies need action plans for their implementation. Actors at regional and national levels need to coordinate amongst themselves as well as with other sector departments and need to be held accountable for progress;

- > The scope of initiatives towards LCD needs to be expanded to all sectors of the economy. With scarce natural resources and higher financial needs, there is a need to encourage circular economy and smart ecosystem-based development;
- > It needs concrete incentives to shift domestic financial flows from high emissions to low carbon projects. Investors need to be encouraged to fund energy efficiency and energy access. Carbon pricing should be extended to all high emissions sectors to generate resources as well as discourage emissions.

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An E-waste collection centre and vermi-composting unit has been set up at the AIWC branch in Kolkata after the waste management workshop as part of the project.

³ http://cansouthasia.net/projects_information.php?id=3&title=promoting-pro-poor-low-carbon-development-strategies-in-india-sri-lanka

⁴ <http://cansouthasia.net/promoting-pro-poor-low-carbon-development-strategies-in-india-sri-lanka/>

2 Supporting low carbon development policy and technology in Sri Lanka

The new Sri Lankan government's enthusiasm for environmentally sound policies has provided civil society with more space to make a compelling case for pro-poor LCD. Accordingly, CANSA's project partners Janathakshan and Integrated Development Association (IDEA) have focused efforts on policy initiatives for the proliferation of renewable energy and energy efficiency across sectors.⁴

What are lessons learned?

- > Coherent policies and concepts are vital to avoid that poverty oriented LCD gets lost in partly conflicting environmental, social and economic policies;
- > Policies and technologies need to complement each other. Energy subsidies for fossil fuels amounting to 3.26% of (nominal) GDP in Sri Lanka distort market prices, encourage higher demand and make renewables less attractive;
- > LCD policies need to take into account the behavioral and political aspects of policy. Behavioral economics and political economic analysis must be used when designing renewable energy policies and advocating for LCD solutions.



Recommendations to governments:

- > Governments should put pro-poor LCD at the center of development planning while drawing on and complementing existing economic, social and environmental policies;
- > Governments should ensure that their policies are consistent with LCD technologies and vice versa. Subsidies must be reformed to reveal the hidden costs of fossil fuels and encourage the adoption of renewable energy. Renewable energy systems should be reformed without compromising the investment climate or threatening energy security.

- > Research such as the World Bank's reports on risk management and behavior should be used to elaborate policies that take into account the way people understand and respond to it.

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3 Integrating low carbon development into the broader regional context in Latin America

CAN Latin America has been working actively to create a space for civil society participation on low carbon development (LCD) inside the Energy Committee of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), which is in charge of building up the further Integration Energy Treaty in South America. The concept is to enable civil society organizations (CSOs) in the region to participate in the discussion of this treaty, but also to ensure that the conditions for participation are open for discussing LCD strategies inside the new treaty.

What are lessons learned?

- > It is necessary to start working on creating space for the participation of CSOs inside regional bodies like UNASUR long before influencing the process towards low carbon development.
- > Networking with CSOs who are working on other issues in UNASUR and making them part of the project increases the available knowledge and capacity. It also helps to engage quickly in the participation process within the UNASUR's bureaucracy.
- > Creating an alliance between CSOs and governments strengthens the level of influence. The project achieved a commitment by the Uruguayan and Chilean governments to support CSO calls for LCD in the regional energy treaty when the negotiation process starts.

Recommendations to governments:

- > Governments need to take concrete measures on low carbon development and support CSOs to participate in policy-making processes at the regional level.
- > Regional bodies like UNASUR present an opportunity to support and enhance LCD strategies. This body has only recently started working on this but its importance will increase in future.

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⁴ <http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/INDC/Published%20Documents/Bolivia/1/INDC-Bolivia-english.pdf>

4 Reducing emissions in the department of Santa Cruz in Bolivia

In Bolivia, our partner FIDES has been working with a broad coalition of more than 70 partners such as university teachers, NGOs, former government officials, activists, and mayors aiming at reducing greenhouse gas emissions (by 40 per cent in the department of Santa Cruz by the year 2020). In addition, through the project FIDES and its allies were able to make recommendations to the elaboration of the Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) of Bolivia.⁵



What are lessons learned?

- > LCD needs different instruments and strategies. It is important to also consider the role of voluntary actions for mitigation and adaptation and to not just focus only on actions that industries or local authorities have to implement.
- > LCD needs a broad coalition of stakeholders such as local and national authorities, industrial and civil society representatives, providing different experiences, capacities and networks.
- > It is crucial to create an open and participatory space and to constantly inform each part of the coalition about the processes. The project first engaged key stakeholders in the diagnosis of the problem and then invited them to think and to propose different kinds of actions.

Recommendations to governments:

- > LCD needs a long-term perspective. The measures implemented need to be incorporated in various policies, considering instruments and mechanisms that are efficient.
- > Public information and awareness, research, innovation and technology are all needed as catalysts for growth and knowledge creation.

- > All LCD initiatives should be considered in the context of the work of the UNFCCC between 2015 and 2020, as well as in the post-2020 period as agreed at COP 21.

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5 Raising political awareness on low carbon development in Tanzania

The main objective of the project coordinated by Tanzania Traditional Energy Development and Environment Organization (TaTEDO) is to create an enabling environment for low carbon solutions that are also effective levers for poverty reduction and benefit the poorest and most vulnerable. This is done through enhancing civil society groups' capacity to advocate on the national and international level. The project also aims to improve decision-makers' understanding of pro-poor LCD solutions and to contribute to better policies by promoting the inclusion of ambitious national/regional renewable energy, energy efficiency and sustainable energy access targets.



What are lessons learned?

- > There is a need to align LCD initiatives with existing national development priorities and the needs of people at the local level. In Tanzania, low carbon issues need to have a close link to food security, energy security, livelihood and economic development.
- > Engaging with politicians and decision makers takes time and resources. CSOs must therefore look for innovative and targeted approaches to engage policy makers.
- > The level of awareness on LCD and the associated benefits is still low nationally and regionally. There is a need for capacity building of the media and also to engage more grassroots organizations.

Recommendations to governments:

- > Governments should formulate and implement low carbon development policies in key sectors. This includes the biomass sector as unsustainable production and utilization has resulted in deforestation and increased CO₂ emissions in Tanzania. It needs a supportive biomass energy policy which recognizes the crucial and important contribution of biomass energy to both LCD and poverty reduction by formalizing the biomass industry and promoting efficient biomass cook stoves as well as fuel switching.
- > LCD cannot be achieved by national governments alone, but needs multi-stakeholder engagement (e.g. local governments, private sector, NGOs, and communities). These different stakeholders need to be supported by ensuring the availability of technical, business, management and financing capacities.

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6 Improved traditional bakery as a specific low carbon solution in Senegal

Traditional bread-bakery is a widespread informal income generating activity in rural and suburban areas of Senegal with a very high carbon footprint due to the massive consumption of firewood. The project by ENDA-Energy as the regional coordinator of the International Network for Sustainable Energy (INFORSE) in West Africa has therefore put forward an improved traditional bakery (boulangerie traditionnelle améliorée, BTA) that it has developed to optimize energy efficiency and improve the working conditions of local bakers. The objective was to promote rural entrepreneurship, fight against energy poverty, conserve natural resources, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and enhance food security (<http://www.inforse.org/africa/Low-Carbon-Strategies.htm>).

What are lessons learned?

- > The dissemination of BTA was facilitated by the inclusive approach of the project, particularly in the context promoting pro-poor LCD strategies.

- > For the introduction of the new technology, demonstration sessions were an important tool. They help to sensitize potential operators and actors in this sector as well as local decision-makers on the applicability of concrete pro-poor low carbon emission solutions.
- > Once the BTA technology was successfully introduced, the dissemination of these bakeries across the country has been promoting itself and creating much interest.

Recommendations to governments:

- > For a proper dissemination of BTA or other poverty oriented technologies, training and capacity building is a must to ensure optimal operation and quality production, which enhances the sustainability of such LCD initiatives.
- > Governments need to establish micro-financing mechanisms to facilitate the development of endogenous economic models for poverty oriented technologies. This can specifically encourage local micro-entrepreneurs.
- > The involvement of different institutional, administrative, financial and political actors is needed for a wide dissemination of new and improved technologies.

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