

Leaving (really) no one behind: Energy Access in Fragile and Conflict Affected Areas

Key quotes from the speakers/panelist

24 June 2021

Part 1 | Welcome and Moderation

Thomas Fohgrub, Head of the Secretariat for the Global Platform for Action on Sustainable Energy in Displacement Settings, UNITAR

Part 2 | Introduction on The Interlinkages between Energy, Peacebuilding, and Inclusive Societies

Linda Wamune, Program Director, Energy Peace Partners

- “Access to energy opens doors to a number of benefits such as economic empowerment, encouraging peace and stability, and making better livelihoods.”
- “UN set a target to move all their missions and their operations to 80% renewables by the year 2030.”

Sarah Rosenberg-Jansen, GPA Senior Advisor and Research Lead

- “Community-based and inclusive humanitarian energy processes go beyond participation as a means of engagement to design programmes and policies with substantive input from refugees and displaced people.”
- “Displaced populations need to be at the heart of sustainable energy solutions all throughout the program and policy cycle.”
- “Really leaving no one behind requires the humanitarian energy sector not just to provide sustainable energy for displaced people but with them.”

Philip Sandwell, Research Associate, Imperial College London and GPA Research Partner

- “We call for improved better data collection to help design policies and programmes that will help embed sustainable energy throughout the humanitarian peace responses.”
- “We also call for better data sharing within and between organisations and especially with private sector.”
- “Energy solutions should cut across humanitarian development and peace objectives so we should focus on how to embed sustainable energy within other areas of programming.”
- “We need to have conducive policy environment if we want to see change. UN member states should implement the existing frameworks and help develop new ones. Organisations should embed clean energy into their targets and their climate action objectives and ultimately their operations in the ground.”
- “Organisations should make partnerships with the private sector feasible and desirable in order to operationalise. We need to make it easier to integrate private sector into these systems and help them develop the long-term solutions so we can bring in their expertise, experience and access to financing and hopefully scale up these solutions.”

Part 3 | Panel discussion on Just Energy Transition in Fragile and Conflict affected areas through Triple Nexus

Habib Mayar, Deputy General Secretary, g7plus

- “Access to energy is an assurance to resilience, economic growth, and self-reliance which are further indispensable factors for sustaining peace.”
- “Most of the conflict-affected fragile countries such as those in the g7+ are rich in renewable energy sources such as solar and wind.”
- “Of the 800 million people who lack access to energy, more than 85 per cent live in fragile and conflict-affected countries.”
- “The barriers to provision of access to energy that we can overcome are lack of investment in renewable energy and a narrow focus on conventional means which are costly and sometimes prone to risks despite the huge reduction in the cost of renewable energy over the past years, there has not been sustainable or substantial investment by donors, private sector and governments in renewable sources such as solar and wind energy potential.”
- “Existing narrative and lack of sufficient data shy away the investors who are willing to invest in renewable energy production. This is coupled by weak institutional capacity to manage energy distribution which is a common feature in the war-affected, conflict-affected countries.”
- “The biggest potential is the partnership among or across humanitarian, peacebuilding, donors, private sector, and the governments.”

Rutu Dave, Senior Energy Specialist, The World Bank Group

- “Data is crucial to providing targeted and efficient solutions on the ground.”
- “We need targeted focus on gender transformative strategies which leverage the opportunities, instruments, new business models, and solutions to enhance the inclusion of women as beneficiaries, employees, and entrepreneurs that provide a solution and not only are stuck being at the receiving end.”
- “We need to work with as many partners as possible to make the transformative change that really needs to happen on the ground and we are looking forward to being part of the solution.”

Hans Olav IBREKK, Climate Envoy, Climate and Security, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

- “I would like to acknowledge GPA’s leadership on this issue because you’ve actually been instrumental in putting the issue on our agenda and I think that you deserve a lot of credit for this because this is a really important topic that we all need to come together to address.”
- “The SDG7 might slip out of reach if we do not act immediately, so a clear call will be made out at the High-Level Dialogue to all of us to take action.”
- “The key focus should be on unlocking private sector investments and looking at multi-year planning and investment cycles.”
- “There are about 11,000 diesel generators and within UN Peacekeeping there are another 10,000. So, there is a market of 20,000 diesel generators that we need to do something with.”

- “We need to develop comprehensive solutions, which means that we need to ensure that we are providing the necessary capacity and expertise because that is limited in most fragile and displacement settings and also within humanitarian agencies.”
- “Humanitarian agencies need to step up and allocate personnel to this important issue. It is not enough just to point that us energy professionals, they also have to do the job.”
- “We have the Norwegian Innovation supported NORCAP programme that help strengthen partners’ capacity and GPA has extensive support from the NORCAP programme and that is excellent vehicle that we are proud of.”
- “We need data to underpin whatever we are doing, which is key for us to move forward.”
- “We are trying actively to incorporate renewable energy in peacekeeping mandates, supplying missions with sufficient energy has become one of the key challenges of planners because rising fuel transportation caused the difficulty of providing fuel to remote bases and the vulnerability of fuel supply by convoys warrants a sustained effort to address these challenges.”
- “Sustainable and clean energy might help missions deliver benefits both inside as well as outside defense. It will improve efficiency, save money, reduce pollution, enhance security, maintain operational freedom, kick-start local access to energy or investments benefitting local communities, and reduce corruption while meeting their mandates.”
- “We need to ensure that mission budgets reflect their energy plans. We need to simplify procurement practices to enable the use of renewable energy and we need to encourage the troop and policy contributing countries to share their best national practices.”
- “We know what to do we know what works through the pilots that have been demonstrated, now we have to scale them up and move beyond pilots. We have the technology, we have the means, we need to connect the dots and get to work, and we need leadership. Failure is not an option.”

Dina Ionesco, Head of Migration, Environment and Climate Change Division, International Organisation for Migration (IOM)

- “Over the past years we made significant progress in the migration management sector and then in the humanitarian side to be more aware and recognize and advance the role of energy in both what we do and how we do it.”
- “If we want to protect the planet and you need to serve the people who are affected by conflict, disasters, and climate change, we need this vision around energy.”
- “You need to lead by example; piloting innovative solutions is a first step but it is the large scale change that is now key to us and that goes for these partnerships, and the GPA is clearly at the heart of this action.”

Mads Hansen, CEO, KUBE Energy

- “There is a great off-taker risk which means that the predictability and the sales of electricity from these renewable energy assets that are installed to last for 25 to 30 years, it is hard to convince investors that there will be clients for these down the line. For the projects where we only sell electricity to international organisations and focus on them in isolation, the work that GPA has been doing on creating a guarantee mechanism holds a lot of promise and can mitigate some of those risks.”
- “For the projects where we also distribute electricity to the host population and the affected populations, this is an area where the development actors might have a very big role to play.”

The real key is to bring down the price of distribution; taking part in investing in distribution mechanisms to the local population and the second could be to look at ways of establishing partnership with local distributors.”

- “The effort that the GPA put into addressing setting up standards that organisations can follow is a very good way of speeding up the project development process.”