

Hall 4, 15 April 2024, 14.00 pm – 15.30 pm

## ***Session: Accelerating Regional Just Energy Transition Investments in the Global South***

Session Chair – Ms. Irene Giner-Reichl, GN-SEC Good Will Ambassador

### **Need to Scale Investments for the ones most on need**

Keeping the 1.5 °C climate target within reach while achieving universal access to modern energy services requires an unprecedented scale-up of sustainable energy investments in emerging and developing economies (EMDEs), excluding China. Annual investment must increase from around USD 260 billion today to USD 1.4–1.9 trillion by 2030—a sevenfold rise.

Yet global investment patterns remain highly uneven. Between 2000 and 2020, EMDEs received only 15% of global renewable energy investment, with Africa capturing just 2%. As a result, many Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) continue to lack access to affordable, long-term finance. These investment gaps also carry significant social and gender implications, as women, youth and vulnerable communities are disproportionately affected by energy poverty and often excluded from emerging economic opportunities linked to the transition.

Approximately 60% of the required investment must come from the private sector, making it essential to address real and perceived risks and to create scalable, bankable markets. Achieving this transformation requires a coordinated response across three interconnected levels:

- Public finance must play a catalytic role by de-risking and leveraging private investment through concessional capital, guarantees, blended finance instruments, and innovative financial mechanisms;
- National governments must establish enabling policy, regulatory, and institutional frameworks that channel investment into bankable projects and domestic green industries; and
- The international community must foster a fair and inclusive financial system that prioritizes the needs of the most vulnerable countries, particularly LDCs and SIDS.

However, so far these ambitions are constrained by manifold barriers and fragmented approaches. There is need for regional and inter-regional approaches to build investor confidence, create economies of scale and accelerate progress, while ensuring that social inclusion and gender equality are embedded at the core of investment decisions

## Regional cooperation as accelerator for just energy transitions

So far, ambitions have been constrained by numerous barriers and fragmented approaches. Regional and inter-regional cooperation can accelerate progress by building investor confidence, creating economies of scale, and overcoming fragmentation. To support this, UNIDO, with the financial support of the Government of Austria has been assisting regional economic communities (RECs) in establishing and operating regional sustainable energy centers since 2010. Today, the Global Network of Regional Sustainable Energy Centers (GN-SEC) comprises ten centers covering 120 countries, including 40 of 45 LDCs and 35 of 39 SIDS, spanning Africa, the Arab region, Asia-Pacific, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

Through regional approaches, the centres address market barriers related to policy and regulation, knowledge and skills development, quality infrastructure, and business and investment promotion. Many centres also integrate gender-responsive approaches, promote youth participation, and support inclusive entrepreneurship ecosystems— strengthening the social foundations of just energy transitions. The GN-SEC platform, hosted by UNIDO, facilitates joint learning as well as south–south and triangular cooperation between centres and regions.

This session will explore how GN-SEC centers and regional cooperation more broadly can address existing barriers to investment and finance. By establishing harmonized regional policies, regulations, and standards, the centers foster economies of scale, enhance investor confidence, and reduce perceived risks associated with sustainable energy investments. They help overcome fragmentation and small market sizes by creating larger, more integrated regional markets that are attractive to investors. Additionally, the centers facilitate project bundling and aggregation, enabling the development of larger, more bankable investment pipelines, and, through partnerships with banks and other financiers, accelerate the deployment of dedicated blended finance instruments and risk mitigation facilities. In doing so, the centers also help ensure that the benefits of increased investment — such as jobs, skills and economic opportunity — are accessible to women, youth and vulnerable communities, contributing to a truly just and inclusive energy transition.

### Agenda

14.00 to 14:05 pm	<b>Session Chair:</b> Ms. Irene Giner-Reichl, GN-SEC Goodwill Ambassador
14.05 to 14:10 pm	<p><b>Short Introduction to the role of the Global Network of Regional Sustainable Energy Centers (GN-SEC),</b> Mr. Martin Lugmayr, Industrial Development Expert, GN-SEC Coordinator, UNIDO</p> <p><i>The session will introduce the Global Network of Regional Sustainable Energy Centres (GN-SEC), a platform for South–South and triangular cooperation that accelerates just energy transitions "from the regions, for the regions". It will set the scene by highlighting the role of regional cooperation in mobilizing sustainable energy finance and investment, particularly for the countries most</i></p>

	<i>in need creating prosperity in an inclusive way that also enhances gender equality and social inclusion.</i>
	<p><b>Panel Discussion I: Spotlight on Africa and other developing parts of the world</b>  <i>Session Chair: Ms. Irene Giner-Reichl, GN-SEC Goodwill Ambassador</i></p>
14:10 to 15:00	<p>Mr. Yunus Alokore, Programme Officer, East African Centre of Excellence for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (EACREEE)</p> <p>Dr. Mawufemo Modjinou, Acting Director for Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency, Project Development &amp; Fund Mobilisation, ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE)</p> <p>Dr. Georgette Fumtchum Tamko, Technical Expert, Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency for Central Africa (CEREEAC)</p> <p>Mr. Readlay Makaliki, Lead Technical Expert – ELLA Programme at the SADC Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (SACREEE) (SACREEE)</p> <p>Ms. Nadia Chioukh, International Cooperation &amp; Communication Manager, Regional Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (RCREEE) for the Arab Region</p> <p>Mr. Avishek Malla, Intervention Manager- Renewable Energy          Action area: International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)/Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Capability for the Hindu Kush Himalaya (REEECH)</p> <p><i>The panelists will discuss why Africa and other developing parts of the world - rich in renewable energy resources, critical minerals, and a young workforce - remains a continent of untapped opportunity for investors and financiers; and where certain groups (such as women, communities and vulnerable populations) still face barriers accessing and leading the clean energy transition. The session will highlight concrete examples of how regional centres help overcome investment barriers by creating scale and reducing risk through harmonised regional policies, regulations, and incentives, project bundling and aggregation, and partnerships with financiers to deploy dedicated blended finance and risk mitigation facilities. Special attention will be given to the social and gender dimensions of these barriers, emphasizing how inclusive approaches can unlock broader societal benefits, ensure equitable access to opportunities, and strengthen the long-term sustainability of energy transitions across the continent.</i></p>

	<p><b>Panel Discussion II: Spotlight on Small Island Developing States</b> <i>Session Chair: Ms. Irene Giner-Reichl, GN-SEC Goodwill Ambassador</i></p>
15:00 to 15:30	<p>Ms. Christine Neves Duncan, Chief of Staff and Project Director, the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Sustainable Energy and Climate Resilience Organisation (SIDS DOCK)</p> <p>Mr. Solomone Fifita, Manager, Pacific Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (PCREEE)</p> <p>Ms. Kiesha Farnum, Head of Partnerships and Programmes, Caribbean Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (CCREEE)</p> <p>Ms. Tatiana Orellana Rivera, Senior Energy Specialist, Secretariat of the Central American Integration System (SICA)</p> <p><i>The panelists will discuss how Small Island Developing States (SIDS) - limited in land but rich in ocean space - offer an attractive niche for investment in integrated sustainable energy and circular economy solutions. The discussion will examine how regional centres help overcome key financial barriers by bundling projects across countries to achieve scale, standardising technical and regulatory frameworks, reducing transaction costs and perceived risk through partnerships with blended finance and risk mitigation facilities. The session will also explore the social and gender dimensions of these investment gaps, highlighting how inclusive approaches can ensure that women, youth and vulnerable coastal communities benefit from new economic opportunities and play an active role in shaping resilient island economies.</i></p>
15.30 pm	<p><b>Concluding remarks by Ms. Irene Giner-Reichl, GN-SEC Goodwill Ambassador</b></p>



**Ambassador ret. Ms. Irene Giner-Reich, GN-SEC Goodwill Ambassador**

Ms. Giner-Reich has been a member of the Austrian Diplomatic Service since 1982. She founded the Global Forum on Sustainable Energy in 1999 as a multi-stakeholder platform for dialogues on energy in the service of sustainable development. She was the Vice-President of REN21 till 2021, founder and vice-president of the Austrian National Committee for UN Women. She is also the co-founder, first president and senior adviser of the Global Women Network for the Energy Transition. She served as Austrian Ambassador to the People's Republic of China and Mongolia (2012-2017) and to Brazil and Suriname (2017-2021). She retired from active service in April 2021.



**Mr. Martin Lugmayr, Industrial Development Expert, Coordinator of the GN-SEC Program, UNIDO**

Martin currently serves as the Programme Manager of the Global Network of Regional Sustainable Energy Centres (GN-SEC) and a portfolio of sustainable energy projects in SIDS and LDCs at UNIDO. Inspired by multilateralism and regional cooperation, Martin spearheaded the creation of the GN-SEC network in partnership with various regional economic communities in Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America-Caribbean. Before joining UNIDO in 2010, he worked on energy policy issues in the context of development cooperation at the Austrian Ministry for Foreign Affairs and coordinated the renewable energy program of the Austrian development Agency (ADA). He has a bachelor of arts degree specializing

European integration issues and master's degrees in both renewable energy technologies and political science.



**Mr. Yunus Alokore, Programme Officer, East African Centre of Excellence for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (EACREEE)**

Yunus serves as a Technical Expert seconded by UNIDO at EACREEE where it is mainly in charge of the fundraising and organization development endeavors of the Centre. Prior to joining EACREEE in 2024, Yunus also served with the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) Promotion of Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Programme (PREEEP) in various capacities with over 10 years of experience of advancing renewable energy and energy efficiency. he holds a master's degree in energy engineering, a certified energy auditor, an expert in climate and renewable energy and bachelor's degree in biosystems engineering.



**Dr. Mawufemo Modjinou, Acting Director for Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency, Project Development & Fund Mobilization, ECREEE**

Mawufemo currently serves as the Acting Director for Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency, Project Development and Fund Mobilization, overseeing the center's work in the area of project development and resource mobilization. He has also been instrumental in the development of the ECOWAS regional certification scheme and quality infrastructure for sustainable energy skills. Prior to joining the center in 2019, Mawufemo also served with the West African Power Pool (WAPP) and coordinated regional power generation and transmission projects in the region and worked with the Ghana Energy Commission as an Inspector. He holds a Doctor of Engineering in Power Engineering and a Master's in Renewable Energy Technologies.



**Dr. Georgette Fumtchum Tamko, Technical Expert - CEREEAC**

Georgette currently serves as a Technical Expert at CEREEAC overseeing regional energy harmonization initiatives notably the development of in the area of renewable energy and energy efficiency for the Central African region. Prior to joining CEREEAC in 2023, she also in various capacities including a serving as a researcher and lecturer at renewable energy lecturer at the Catholic University of Central Africa and 2iE Foundation as well as project engineer at CANOPY Energies in Cameroon. she holds phd in engineering sciences, a master's degree in energy, electrical, and renewable energy engineering as well as energy and environment and bachelor's degree in physics.



**Mr. Readlay Makaliki, Lead Technical Expert – ELLA Programme, SACREEE**

Readlay serves as the the Lead Technical Expert at SACREEE on the Sida funded and UNIDO implemented Energy Efficient for Sustainable Livelihoods in Africa (EELA) Program implemented in East, West and South African regions with country windows in Kenya, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Prior to joining SACREEE in 2018 as Renewable Energy Expert, he also in the Electricity Utility in Zambia in generation, transmission and distribution roles as a Senior Manager Demand Side Management (DSM), Divisional Manager Copperbelt, Technical Services Manager and Principal Protection Engineer. he holds a master of science in electrical power engineering and a bachelor of engineering in electrical engineering.



**Ms. Nadia Chioukh, International Cooperation & Communication Manager,  
Regional Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (RCREEE) for the  
Arab Region**

Nadia currently serves as the International Cooperation & Communication Manager at the Regional Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (RCREEE), where she oversees strategic partnerships and regional engagement across the Arab and Mediterranean regions. With an extensive background in sustainable energy policy, she previously served as the Director of Cooperation and Communication for the Algerian Commissariat for Renewable Energies and Energy Efficiency and held as head of International Cooperation Department at the National Agency for the Promotion and Rationalization of Energy Use.



**Mr. Avishek Malla, Intervention Manager- Renewable Energy  
Action Area, International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development  
(ICIMOD)/REEECH**

Avishek manages the energy portfolio at ICIMOD and REEECH. He is a seasoned leader with proven expertise in steering complex, multi-million-dollar renewable energy programme. He specializes in climate renewable energy project financing with a focus on climate adaptation, and mitigation with national and international recognition for his contributions, including multiple awards from government and international agencies. Prior to joining ICIMOD, he

also served other capacities across governmental, intergovernmental, private sector, and academic institutions including the Asian Development Bank and the government of Nepal.

he holds a master's degree in renewable energy and a postgraduate diploma in energy and environment as well as a bachelor's in mechanical engineering and a diploma in management.



**Ms. Christine Neves Duncan, Chief of Staff and Project Director, the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Sustainable Energy and Climate Resilience Organisation (SIDS DOCK)**

Christine serves as the Chief of Staff and **Project Director** assisting with the coordination of the work of the SIDS DOCK Work Programme and the Island Women Open Network (IWON) as well as the overall management of the Secretariat. She also serves as the Principal Advisor to the Secretary-General and credited for having played a key role in coordination of start-up activities of CCREEE, launched in Barbados in 2015, as part of the GN-SEC network.



**Mr. Solomone Fifita, Manager, PCREEE**

Solomone serves the Manager PCREEE overseeing the overall operations of the center under the Pacific Community Secretariat (SPC). Prior the latter role, Solomone also served with SPC in various capacities including as Head of the Pacific's Regional Energy Programme as

well as an Energy Adviser with the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) project manager for regional Pacific energy and climate change projects, and prior to that. He has also served the energy planner for the Kingdom of Tonga as well as leading the authoring and review of IPCC reports and national UNFCCC climate communications. Solomon holds a master of science in Energy Planning and Policy as well as a bachelor of arts in Land Management and Development



**Ms. Kiesha Farnum, Head of Partnerships and Programmes, CCREEE**

Keisha serves as the Head of Partner at CCREEE overseeing the centre's programmatic initiatives and strengthening partnerships. She is an accomplished development and project management practitioner extensive experience in development cooperation have served with international organizations like the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Canadian Agency for International Development (CIDA), Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) in close collaboration with GIZ, the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Keisha holds a master's degree in project management focused on oil, gas, and renewables economics, plus a bachelor's degree in psychology. anagement with specialization in the Economics of Oil, Gas and renewables and a bachelor of science in psychology.



**Ms. Tatiana Orellana Rivera, Executive Coordinator of the Energy Coordination Unit (UCE) of the SICA Secretariat**

The logo for the 4th International Sustainable Energy Conference 2026. It features the letters 'ISEC' in a large, bold, white sans-serif font on a dark blue background. To the right of the letters, the text '4th INTERNATIONAL SUSTAINABLE ENERGY CONFERENCE 2026' is written in a smaller, white, all-caps sans-serif font. The background of the logo has a subtle pattern of small white squares.

4<sup>th</sup> INTERNATIONAL  
SUSTAINABLE ENERGY  
CONFERENCE 2026

14 – 16 April 2026  
Messecongress Graz  
Austria

Tatiana is served as the Executive Coordinator of the Energy Coordination Unit at the SICA Secretariat and overseeing the operations of SICREEE. In her capacity, she particularly supports the implementation of projects aimed at promoting the integration of renewable energy, energy efficiency and digitalization across the region. Prior to joining SICA in 2023, Tatiana had also served in various capacities in the energy sector in Central America having served as a Consultant and a GIZ Technical Advisor with the he Renewable Energies and Energy Efficiency Program (4E). She holds a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering.