A Roundtable to Conceptualize and Initiate
Global Ecosystem Hubs for Sustainable Energy

CONCEPT NOTE AND AGENDA

GLOBAL ECOSYSTEM HUBS

FOR SUSTAINABLE ENERGY ACCESS

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Two major injustices that plague the world today— stark inequality and the unequal impact of climate change. The two are inextricably linked with the impact of one (climate change) grossly exacerbating the impact on the other (inequality).

Inequality is often described from an economic lens and in terms of the ownership of the world's wealth by the richest vs the rest. On the other hand, if one begins to view inequality in other critical areas of development such as education, health, employment, food security, financial inclusion, water resources and so on, the widening gap between the haves and the have nots becomes much starker.

Economic growth is often hyped as a sure means to rise above poverty but it cannot sustain at the cost of social and environmental injustice.

Thus, it is critical to promote wellbeing of all human beings that is sustained and inclusive. **In many of the existing development programs, for deep economic growth** in itself serves little purpose and needs to be **in consonance with a quality of growth that includes social progress** such as access to good schools, health care, electricity, safe water, and that are not hindered by socioeconomic status, gender, ethnicity, and geography.

Sustainable Energy and Tackling Poverty

Access to energy, in a sustainable manner, is among the most important anti-poverty (poverty alleviation) tools. It underpins all other development goals.

Yet energy access as a way to fight poverty is often not prioritized. Many a time it is perceived as a technology or a simple add on intervention instead of a component of the larger solution itself. Demand for decentralized energy is set to increase because basic services such as health, education, livelihoods etc. will need specific energy inputs for achieving their development goals.

[1] Reward Work Not Wealth. Briefing Paper, Oxfam 2018

The inclusive ecosystem approach aims to use sustainable energy access to create local systems that innovate, develop, disseminate and sustain solutions over a period of time.

This approach would need to specifically target and strengthen five aspects which determine the accessibility of a solution to the end user:

Innovations

need assessments to design and match appropriate and efficient technical, financial and ownership models

Financial Access

to ensure affordability and investments in long term energy assets, and not short term consumptive products

LOCAL SYSTEMS FOR SUSTAINABLE ENERGY ACCESS

Human Resources

to articulate and solve local problems, deliver solutions and ensure the maintenance and performance of energy assets

Policy

to support practitioners, and develop responses to ground realities and allow for strong end user feedback loops

Incubation

local entities (non-profit organizations, enterprises-last mile integrators, service providers, vendors, manufacturers) who innovate and customise the delivery of solutions based on the end user needs

NEED FOR A PLATFORM

The marginalized populations of the world are ditributed mostly in the global South and are differentiated in numerous ways. The poverty levels and forecast can be classified by income levels, places of residence (rural, urban or tribal), minority status, adjoining geographical terrains and climate issues. A deeper understanding warrants a basis for the need of a collaborative platform, which is proposed to be built for and by the global South. Three deductions can be made which further underscores the need for such a platform:

1. Similarity in nature of causes of poverty across boundaries

The determinants of poverty are often similar across geographies. Poverty determined by inaccessible terrain, political strife, low financial inclusion index, under-developed technology supply chain and local entrepreneurship-are conditions that define some of the North Eastern States of India and might find similarity in parts of Tanzania. **Thus, processes and learnings developed in Tanzania, should find relevance in specific parts of India and vice versa.**

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2. Poverty and timeframe of ecosystem

The modalities of intervention in different poverty contexts is also determined by the maturity levels of the ecosystem. Therefore, a spectrum of solutions and programs need to be designed. **Each country, region, community can thus be understood in relation to each other, lying in different time frames of ecosystem maturity. This can help in creating customised strategies in cognizance of how much the supporting ecosystem needs to be developed.**

For example: Programs designed around the agriculture movement in India (initiated in 1960s), laid down the public infrastructure of rural banking system, civil society organizations and skilling institutes that can be leveraged today to unlock market based solutions. But, these programs cannot be implemented effectively in countries with lesser developed ecosystems for agriculture. The priority should be to build this supportive infrastructure, followed by phasing of interventions dependent on ecosystem maturity.

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3. Local leadership and capacity building

A single approach to development and homogenous programs cannot be scaled across regions with varying ecosystems. Instead, there needs to be a focus on processes that allow for multiplication of efforts via local stakeholders and leadership who understand the nuances of local contexts and priorities. **Sustained development is often the result of decentralization of skills. This requires building of strategies, design and implementation by not just incorporating local inputs through consultative sessions, but creation of platforms and programs that gives the power of decision making to the end users.**

Timeline of relative ecosystem development status'

Analysing countries with similar indicators, vulnerabilities and ecosystem factors is critical to understand the nuances that helped develop a particular region. This kind of cross learning between various regions leads to an inclusive environment for all.

MALI
WEST AFRICA

Agriculture as a % of total Livelihood	70%
HDI	0.427
Climate	Prone to droughts
World Risk Index	8.39%
% of adults that own a transaction account	20.10%
% of adults that are unbanked and either save or make payments outside the formal financial system	42.10%

ETHIOPIA
HORN OF AFRICA

Agriculture as a % of total Livelihood	80%
HDI	0.463
Climate	Prone to droughts
World Risk Index	7.04%
% of adults that own a transaction account	21.80%
% of adults that are unbanked and either save or make payments outside the formal financial system	41.10%

ODISHA, INDIA

HDI	0.697
Climate	Cyclone and drought prone

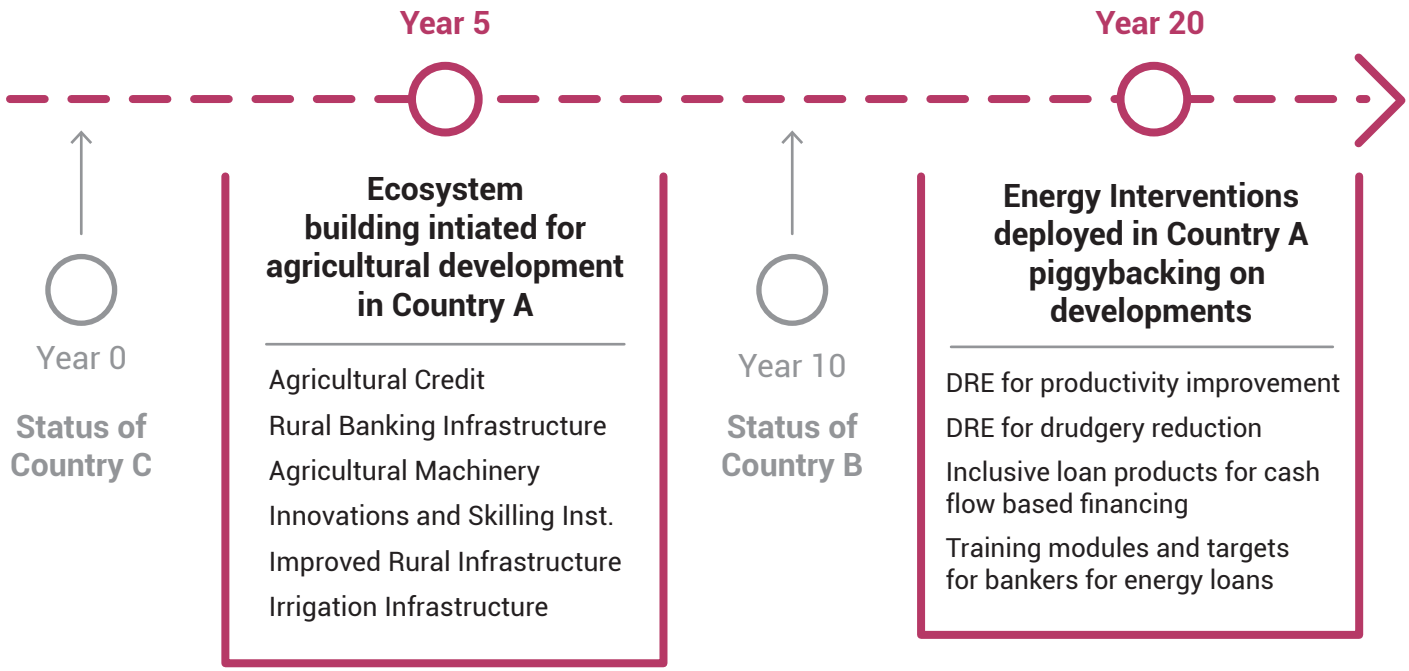
MINDORO, PHILIPPINES

HDI	0.559
Climate	Deadly typhoons, volcano eruptions, earthquakes prone

Relative ecosystem development status' through time

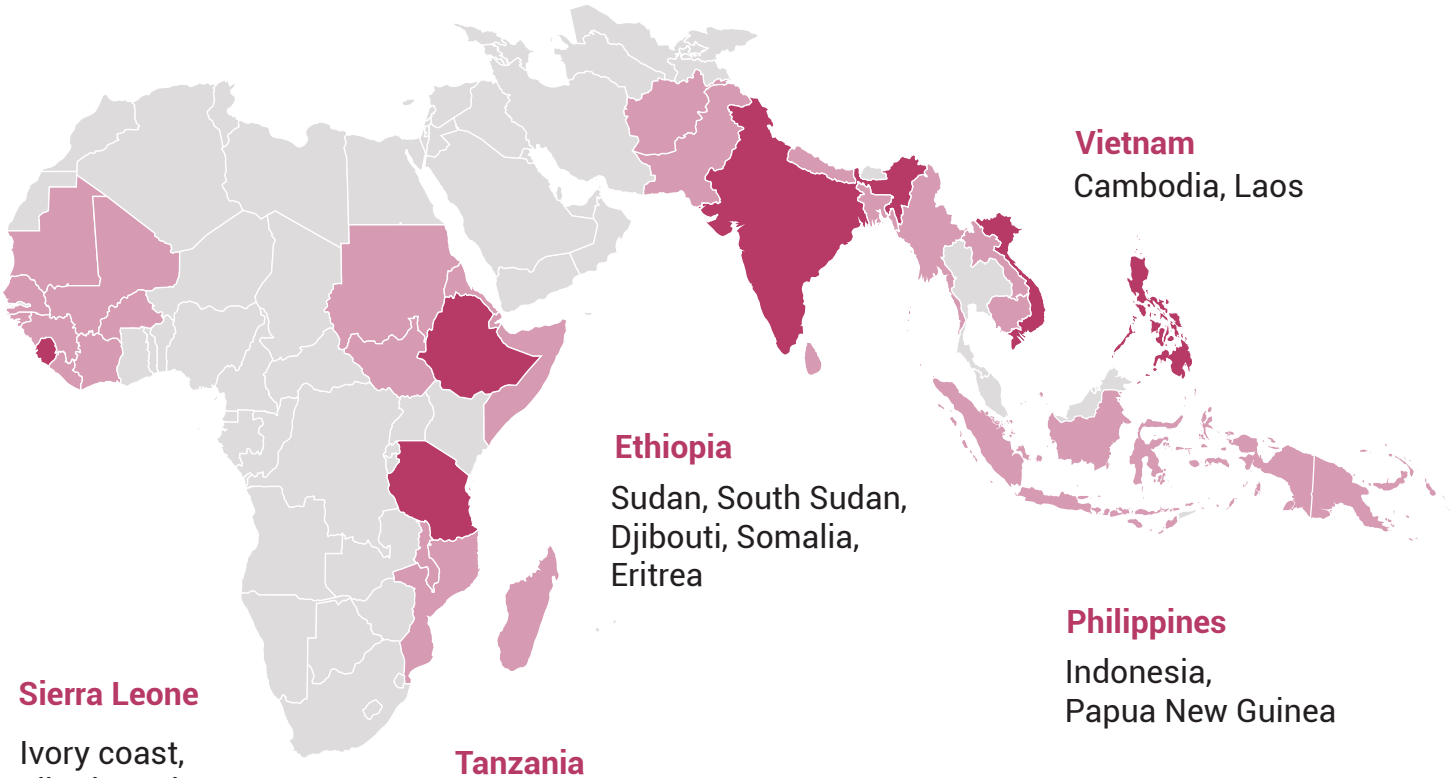
Country A - Most Developed Ecosystem
Country B - Lesser Developed Ecosystem
Country C - Least Developed Ecosystem

Country A Timeline



To further this thought process, and coordinate for creation of localised innovations; regional ecosystem creation hubs can be identified and developed- each catering to and determined by their own geographical terrains, climatic issues and cultural uniqueness.

For example: six implementation based, innovation hubs can be conceptualised:



India

Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal and Myanmar

Vietnam

Cambodia, Laos

Ethiopia

Sudan, South Sudan, Djibouti, Somalia, Eritrea

Philippines

Indonesia, Papua New Guinea

Sierra Leone

Ivory coast, Liberia, Guinea, Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea Bissau, Gambia, Senegal

Tanzania

Uganda, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique

A Roundtable to Conceptualize and Initiate **Global Ecosystem Hubs for Sustainable Energy**

With the looming deadline of 2030, the SDGs represent international commitment to build a more sustainable, safer and prosperous planet for all humanity. The collective strength in diversity offers an opportunity to build on analogous contexts across and within countries to arrive at multiple blueprints that can serve as an archive of processes of how poverty can be alleviated through ground up, inclusive thinking and interventions via decentralized sustainable energy. Rather than focus on targets of poverty reduction, it is a time to challenge this approach and focus on creation of local capacity that can help reach those targets in a manner that create resilient and sustainable pathways for the poor that go beyond 2030.

The Global Ecosystem Hubs for Sustainable Energy is a proposed international platform to position UN's SDG 7 as a critical catalyst for a sustainable and equitable future. The idea of the Global Ecosystem Hubs is to create connections, facilitate productive transfers of local knowledge, local expertise and networks and to catalyze implementation of pro-poor sustainable energy solutions - all through South-South cooperations. It is proposed to become a learning exchange platform for sustainable energy and development agendas between locally led voices in communities and regions of distinct climatic, geographic, political, socio-economic features. It is intended to transform efficiency and effectiveness of sustainability and impact driven programs by becoming a channel for model and process replication and contextualization.

The Roundtable discussion, organised on 26th September 2019, will bring together practitioners, thought leaders, philanthropists, funding agencies, among others to discuss the scope of such a concept.

VENUE:

Conference Room M, 27th Floor,
Morgan Stanley Global Headquarters,
1585 Broadway, New York 10036

AGENDA		THURSDAY 26th SEPTEMBER 2019
14.30 - 15.00 hrs	**Welcome and Brief Introductions**	IRENA and SELCO Foundation
15.00 - 15.30 hrs	**Opening Remarks and Context Setting**	Rachel Kyte Kandeh Yumkella Rabia Ferroukhi
15.30 - 16.15 hrs	**Ecosystem Driven Approach to Sustainable Energy:** Discussion on concept, agenda and role of the Global Ecosystem Hubs for Sustainable Energy	Presentation by SELCO Foundation
16.15 - 16.30 hrs	**Coffee Break**	
16.30 - 18.00 hrs	**Open Discussion**	Moderated by Harish Hande
18.00 hrs	**Closing Remarks**	Peter Goldmark