Event Report

Stakeholder's Dialogue on **Renewable Energy and Clean Cooking Solutions** for the MRU Countries

Date: Wednesday 7th April 2021

Conveners: Mano River Union (MRU) Secretariat, and The Energy Nexus Network (TENN)
Host: Virtually hosted by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)

Participating Organizations

Event Summary

The Mano River Union (MRU) Secretariat in collaboration with The Energy Nexus Network (TENN) hosted the **MRU Stakeholders' Dialogue on Renewable Energy and Clean Cooking Solution.**

The event was attended by the Secretary General of the MRU, CEO of TENN, Deputy Director General of IRENA, parliamentarians and focal persons from the Ministries of Energy in MRU Members States (Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone), policymakers, academics, and organizations including representatives from private sector companies working in the renewable energy and clean cooking space.

At the end of the event actions to accelerate efforts on the implementation of joint measures for the harmonization of legislative and institutional provisions to developing a common subregional strategy on renewable energy and clean cooking solutions for the MRU subregion were agreed upon.

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Brief on **Mano River Union (MRU)**

Mano River Union (MRU) is an Intergovernmental Institution comprising of four countries: Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The Organization aims to strengthen the capacity of Member States **to integrate their economies and coordinate development programs** in the areas of peace building, as a prerequisite to any development, trade promotion, development of industry, energy, agriculture, natural resources, transport and telecommunications, monetary and financial affairs; in short, **all aspects of economic and social life of the Member States**.

Created on 3rd October 1973 through the signing of the Malema Declaration by President William Tolbert Junior of the Republic of Liberia and President Dr. Siaka Stevens of the Republic of Sierra Leone, the MRU as an intergovernmental organization came into being. The Union enlarged by the accession of the Republic of Guinea and the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, respectively on October 25th 1980 and May 15th 2008.

In May 2008, Heads of State and Government of the Union took a decision to revive the Union. The MRU Secretariat was accordingly mandated by the May 2008 Summit to **pursue the revival, growth, socio-economic development and integration of the sub region within the framework of four pillars**, namely institutional revitalization and restructuring with focus on the Union Secretariat and public sector of Member States; peace and security; economic development and regional integration; and social development. In recent years, the MRU Secretariat has made the regional energy CLSG interconnection priority project. The Secretariat of the MRU is located in Freetown, Sierra Leone.

Background on the Event

Expanding access to energy in the sub-Saharan Africa is key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Energy is an enabler for socio-economic development considering its important role in facilitating economic growth and social wellbeing. However, according to the Energy Progress Report, 2.8 billion are unable to use modern and clean energy for cooking. In Sub-Saharan Africa alone, over 600 million people lack access to electricity, and about 900 million lack access to clean cooking solutions.

The current lack of access to reliable and affordable modern energy is slowing down economic growth and seriously affecting service delivery in many development sectors, including health, education, and food production/processing. With significant population growth and massive urbanization, governments in the region are under tremendous pressure to achieve economic growth, provide jobs and social services and at the same time meet climate change targets. Consequently, decisions on energy sources to respond to all those needs will determine the economic transformation and prosperity in the region, with serious implications on climate change, which is already disproportionally impacting the region although it accounts for less than 4% of GHG emissions, and just 2% of energy-related global CO_2 missions.

Against this background the Mano River Union (MRU) Secretariat in collaboration with The Energy Nexus Network (TENN) decided to work with the MRU Member States (Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone) on a sub-regional initiative to support the development of the renewable energy sector and address clean cooking challenges. The initiative culminated into the first *"High-level Multi-Stakeholder Renewable Energy and Clean Cooking Conference for the Mano River Union"* held in Freetown-Sierra Leone on 18th and 19th November 2019.

The Conference participants included high-ranking officials (Ministers of Energy, Parliamentarians, and Renewable Energy Private Sector Practitioners) from MRU Member States and a plethora of development partners.

Partners of MRU-I Renewable Energy and Clean Cooking Conference comprised of the Ministries of Energy from MRU Member States, USAID-Power Africa, Global Renewables Congress/World Future-GRC/WFC; ECREEE; Tony Blair Institute-TBI, Hivos, and Energia, with coordination support provided by ILEM Consultancy Firm.

Building on the outcome of MRU-I and recognizing the role access to energy plays in socio-economic development, TENN has been working with the MRU Secretariat to mobilise support from a plethora of partners to accelerate action on renewable energy and clean cooking solutions. This would necessitate supporting a feasibility study on the formulation of an Integrated Renewable Energy Action Plan for a common strategy on renewable energy and clean cooking solutions for the MRU Sub-region.

Due to ongoing COVID-9 pandemic, the event was held virtually on Wednesday 7th April 2021, hosted by the International Renewable Energy Agency-IRENA. There about 70 active participants (Speakers and Discussant) with over 300 participants listening-in the event sessions.

Event Objective

Overall Objective: Building on the outcome of MRU-I Renewable Energy and Clean Cooking Conference, the overall objective of the event was to demonstrate strong leadership to improve the renewable energy sector and accelerate action for joint measures on renewable energy development including clean cooking solutions in the Mano River Union subregion.

Specific Objectives: The following specific objectives were pursued during the event**:**

i. *Update Member States and partners on progress made on the Freetown Energy Declaration since MRU-1 High-level Multi-Stakeholder Renewable Energy and Clean Cooking Conference*.

ii. *Explore support programmes to accelerate action on energy transition in the MRU subregion.*

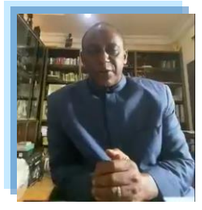
iii. *Discuss proposal for a subregional study on Renewable Energy and Clean Cooking Solutions*

iv. *Determine optimal approaches and partners' funding arrangement to undertake the study.*

Session Deliberation

- Opening

Moderator: Hon. Dr. Kandeh K. Yumkella, *Founder CEO for the Energy Nexus Network-TENN*



Dr. Kandeh K. Yumkella briefed participants on work done post MRU-I Renewable Energy and Clean Cooking Conference held in Freetown in 2019. He also thanked the conference-organizing partners, and the MRU Secretariat for the constructive collaboration with TENN in engaging parliamentarians, political leaders, and energy experts from MRU Member States to discuss pathways to unlock the energy potential in the MRU subregion with existing renewable energy resources.

Moreover, he highlighted some of the analysis done post MRU-I meeting supported by the World Bank, and GIZ EnDev Programme respectively. He reiterated that the outcome of these preliminary analyses underpinned the need to conduct in-depth study in the region to appreciate the state of play and needs for renewable energy and clean cooking solutions. Hence the need to update partners and Member MRU Member States on work done during COVID.

He concluded his introductory remarks by defining the structure of the different Sessions of the Meeting, namely **1st Session** dealing with renewable energy potential in the MRU subregion; **2nd Session** looking at Clean Cooking; and **3rd Session** dealing with effort on mobilizing political action for renewable energy and clean cocking. Ensuring general policy drive strategy to achieve energy access and clean cooking are part of development planning process of MRU Member States. He recognized the presence of all representatives and heads of organizations at the meeting. He introduced the MRU Secretary General for her Welcoming Remarks.

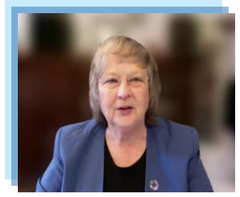
Welcoming Remarks: Amb. Medina A. Wesseh, *Secretary General of the Mano River Union-MRU Secretariat*

Amb. Medina A. Wesseh welcomed dignitaries present at the event (namely, **Hon. Bärbel Höhn**-Special Representative for Energy in Africa, Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany; **Mme Gauri Singh-**Deputy Director General, IRENA; **Mme Yabei Zhang-**World Bank Group. She also recognized and welcomed **Honorable Parliamentarians/Senators and Energy Focal Persons from MRU Member States**; and **Representatives of International Partners (**Global Renewable Congress; Climate Parliament; Trafigura; Global LPG Partnership; GIZ EnDev Programme; and Loughborough University**)**.

Amb. Wesseh opined that despite the enormous natural energy potential identified within the MRU (i.e. 12,600MW of hydroelectric capacity, and solar irradiation of between 800 and 2,200 KWh/m²/year), energy insecurity remains in the MRU region, especially in rural, remote and border areas communities. Having succeeded to establish a platform on renewable energy and clean cooking for the MRU Subregion, Amb Wesseh commended the laudable effort of Dr. Yumkella and team for working with the MRU Secretariat through his TENN initiative. She also thanked partners for their willingness to be part of the coalition of the willing to expand energy access and clean cooking solutions for socio-economic development and the wellbeing of people.

She emphasized the need to take into consideration rural electrification in development planning processes, as access to energy affects socio-economic, health, environment and the wellbeing of rural poor in boarder areas. She also said that having access to clean and modern energy options would contribute to reducing the effect of climate change, and reverse degradation of forest cover exploited to produce charcoal for domestic energy use. She concluded by encouraging support from partners in the conduct of a detail subregional study of the energy sector, facilitate harmonization of energy policy, and accompany the implementation of a subregional renewable energy strategy and programme.

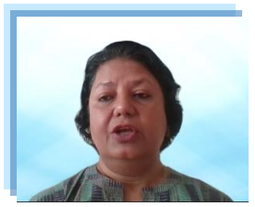
Setting the Scene: **Hon. Bärbel Höhn**, *Special Representative for Energy in Africa, German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development*.



Hon. Bärbel Höhn set the scene of the meeting by providing a contextual background on engagement with the MRU-Secretariat and Member States through TENN. She mentioned that this partnership is forged based on the common interest to decentralized renewable energy. Hence, the focus should be on **1)** building renewable energy, and **2)** providing efficient and clean stove for cooking using financial models.

Hon. Höhn said that private capital for renewable energy development is key to providing on-site capacity building for locals to be able to repair and use renewable energy. She said that addressing long-term solution on access to energy challenge will reduce poverty, hunger, and mitigate climate change challenges. She pledged the support of the Global Renewables Congress through EnDev regional programme in facilitating work of the MRU Secretariat and TENN with a network of parliamentarians across national borders in legislating renewable energy and clean cooking, which is key to addressing the energy deficit and achieving SDG 7.

Keynote Address: **Mme. Gauri Singh**, *Deputy Director General of the International Renewable Energy Agency-IRENA*



In her Keynote Address, Mme. Gauri Singh underscored the effort of Dr. Yumkella in particular for starting and sustaining the subregional dialogue with relevant stakeholders on *"renewable energy and clean cooking the MRU countries of Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone".* She mentioned that access to energy and providing clean cooking solutions are enablers for socio-economic development. She provided data based on IRENA's analysis, showing that within existing national and regional (at the level of ECOWAS), electricity demand in the MRU subregion is said to increase fourfold from 7,373 GWh in 2015 to close to 30,000GWh by 2030.

She noted that energy renewable would prove to be the cheapest response to addressing the energy demand in the subregion considering it has less financial cost, improves socio-economic status, and the environmental benefit using renewable energy technology.

She mentioned that energy is an enabler for achieving development priorities for food security, rural development, healthcare and wellbeing, water and sanitation, education, youth and woman empowerment supporting small and medium-size enterprises. She stressed the need to address the energy access and clean cooking deficit in the MRU subregion (with the exception of Côte d'Ivoire) by tapping on the enormous renewable energy potential (hydropower, solar and biomass) in the subregion. If properly utilized, she said it will prove to be a viable option to providing access to electricity and clean cooking options to citizens in the MRU and could put the subregion on a sustainable path that could lead to prosperity and low carbon emission, thereby leaving nobody behind in the Member States.

Mme. Singh further noted that achieving this goal would require investing in the enabling policy framework, the right kind of technology, private sector engagement, financing (using investment instruments such as green bonds, blended financing, and tailored innovative financial risks mitigation instrument) to support pilot project investments or scale-up financing from the private sector. She nonetheless recognised that scaling up renewable energy investment would depend on the ability of policymakers and public finance institutions to identify and address different investment constraints and mitigate investment risks facing private finance. Governments and public financial institutions have the unique opportunity to drive private sector engagement through policy and regulatory solutions and mitigation instruments by governments.

With the ongoing fight against the COVID-19 pandemic for a second year, she highlighted the importance of energy in meeting with the current challenge, as access to energy has been critical in the diagnosis and treatment of the disease and storage of vaccines. Mme. Singh therefore maintained that renewable energy is a very viable solution to address this urgent need, particularly in the context of rural healthcare in places underserved by existing power infrastructure.

Mme. Singh concluded her remarks by maintaining that effective and successful transformation of the energy landscape would require political will, investment at scale, and development of human and institutional capacity. She closed by reiterating IRENA's support through its regional and country-level engagements in providing required assistance for the study on Renewable Energy and Clean Cooking solutions in the Mano River Union.

- **Session I** – Growing the MRU Renewable Energy Market

Presentation: **Dr. Rabia Ferroukhi**, *IRENA Director – Knowledge, Policy and Finance Centre, made a presentation on IRENA's contribution to MRU renewable energy.*

She started by providing insight of the formation the International Renewable Energy Agency-IRENA, noting that IRENA was established as an intergovernmental organization in 2011 headquartered in Abu Dhabi, in the United Arab Emirates-UAE. The Mandate of IRENA she said is *"to promote the widespread adaptation and sustainable use of all forms of renewable energy worldwide"* with 163 Members and 21 States in Accession process.

With reference to technical assistance to Members States in Africa, Mme. Ferroukhi, said that IRENA's support to Africa is placed under 5 subregional blocks, namely: **1)** West African Clean Energy Corridor (WACEC) with an ongoing project called the West African Power Pool; **2)** Regional Renewable Energy Roadmap for Central Africa; **3)** SADC Entrepreneurship Support Facility with an ongoing project called Southern Africa Power Pool (SAPP); **4)** Global Geothermal Alliance with an ongoing projects called Africa Clean Energy Corridor (ACEC), and Eastern Africa Power Pool (EAPP); and **5)** Pan-Arab Clean Energy (PACE).

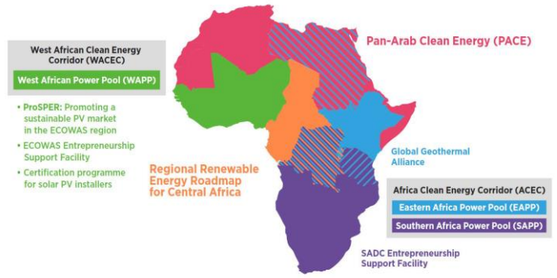


Figure-1: IRENA's engagement Framework in Africa

Dr. Ferroukhi mentioned that IRENA's Energy access services for Africa are in three layer-intervention, namely **a)** International Off-Grid Renewable Energy Conference-IOREC; **b)** Energy Entrepreneurship Support; and **c)** Renewable Energy Solutions for Healthcare Facilities.

At Global level, IRENA's work on Energy Access for achieving SDG 7 are grouped into seven layers as follow**:**

- **Off-Grid Renewable Energy Statistics:** Annual Reporting of off-grid renewables statistics; Contribution to Annual SDG-7 Training Report.
- **Policy and Regulatory Analysis:** Analysis of country-level policies and regulations. Licensing, tariff setting and interconnection.
- **Investment Framework and Project Facilitation:** Tracking Investments in the off-grid renewable energy technologies; Platforms for investment mobilization.
- **Entrepreneurship Promotion:** Entrepreneurship support: ECOWAS and SADC Renewable Energy Entrepreneurship Support Facility.
- **Benefits and Cross-Sector Opportunities:** Impact of off-grid renewables on employment and gender; Assessment of potential in agriculture and health.
- **Technology Innovation and Quality Infrastructure:** Mini-Grid technology innovation outlook highlighting impact on costs and reliability; Quality and Standards.
- **Advocacy:**

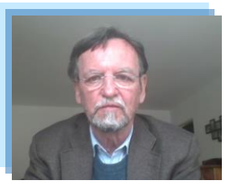
In concluding her presentation Dr. Ferroukhi, outlined IRNA's planned engagement in the MRU Subregion which include:

I. Renewable energy solutions to bridge the energy gap in MRU countries while advancing environmental and socio-economic development goals.

II. Extensive analytical work, which would involve resource assessment to policy design and project facilitation tools, deployed to support renewable energy adoption in the sub-region.

III. **First output:** Conduct a sub-regional study to analyse the current landscape of renewable energy, define key challenges and identify priority joint actions.

Discussant: Dr. Carsten Hellpap, *Senior Energy Expert at EnDev Green Energy for Africa II Development, and former Director-Energizing Development-EnDev*.



Representing EnDev at this event, Dr. Carsten Hellpap debriefed participants that EnDev is a multi-donor partnership programme based on a partnership between the Netherlands, Germany, Norway, Switzerland, Sweden and United Kingdom with supports channelled through their respective development agencies.

Dr. Hellpap informed the participants that the thematic thrust of EnDev focuses on coordinating actions amongst donors and implementing agencies on energy development. Noting that EnDev's supports access to modern, lasting, and affordable energy services to households, social enterprises and SMEs in 25 developing countries across Africa, Asia and Latin America. He outlined that EnDev provides the following support services with the aim to facilitate energy access to households especially in rural areas, where energy poverty is highest:

- ***Energy for household applications:*** *provision of modern energy for lighting and small electrical appliances (e.g. information and communication technologies)*;
- ***Energy for cooking:*** *provision of efficient and clean cooking, baking and space heating devices*;
- ***Energy for social infrastructure*** *(schools, hospitals and community centres): provision of energy for the use of electrical as well as cooking and heating devices*; **and**
- ***Energy for small and medium-sized enterprises, cooperatives and craftsmen:*** *provision of modern energy services for productive use, for income generation*.

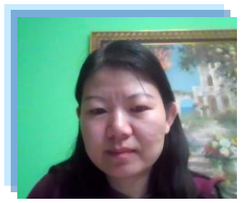
Dr. Hellpap informed participants at the virtual event that through EnDev there is an ambitious plan to use international funds as efficient as possible by supporting decentralized systems such as mini-grids and stand-alone systems to supply the rural population with a basic level of electricity.

Dr. Hellpap said that an essential prerequisite to achieving these interventions hinges on establishing a common data platform accessible to all, which includes both basic data of the energy sector and project data. He said that IRENA's support for a study in the MRU subregion would contribute to establishing a platform for coordinated activities in the sector in Member States of the Union. He suggested that IRENA should therefore consider exploring ongoing successful local initiatives in their study.

As Grid extension are often too expensive and economically not viable to provide access to electricity for households, social institutions and small and medium enterprises in rural areas, Dr. Hellpap opined therefore that private companies will only invest in decentralized Mini-Grids if they have the security of being able to operate their systems over a longer period of time. This requires that the extension of the grid is predictable and that corresponding plans are accessible. He therefore recommended that the plans for the national grid and for the promotion of decentralized systems should be coordinated and taken into account in the corresponding IRENA supported studies in the MRU.

- **Session II** – Scaling-up Access to Modern Energy Cooking Services

Presentation: Dr. Yabei Zhang, *Senior Energy Specialist /Clean Cooking Fund Lead at the World Bank*.



Dr. Yabei Zhang made her presentation focusing on the State of play of Modern Energy Cooking Services (MECS) in the MRU countries. She provided insight on the aggregation of the population in MRU countries without access to clean cooking fuel and technologies spanning from 2000 to 2018. According to the ESMAP 2020 study, over **43 million people** in the MRU (around **86% of the population**) do not have access to clean cooking with 10million in transition and over 33million facing higher access barrier to clean cooking solutions. This trend has resulted to about **US$ 17.78 billion/year cost of inaction** aggregated across Gender (US$ 9.02) billion, Health US$ (6.38 billion); and Climate (US$ 2.38 billion).

To achieve SDG7 Dr. Zhang said there is need therefore to rethink household energy need for cooking to reduce the exposure to emissions. This she said would necessitate developing and deploying Modern Energy Cooking Services, and Improved Cooking Service i.e. from existing 0-tier to tier-4 as per the World Bank standard. She outlined the following obstacle to progress:

- *Lack of interventions and solutions that are fully responsive to the underlying needs of lower-income and rural households*.
- *Complex and fragmented cooking ecosystem for both supply and demand side of the sector*.
- *Lack of "champions" and intergovernmental coordination*; **and**
- *Lack of an enabling environment for investment in the clean cooking sector*.

In her presentation, Dr. Zhang illustrated how this trend has resulted to people having varied opinions on access to Modern Energy Services and Improved Cooking Services.

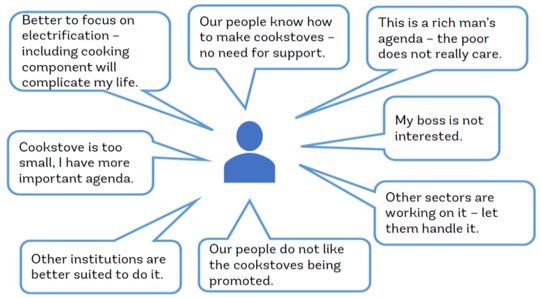


Figure-2: Opinions on access to clean cooking solutions

With ongoing demonstrated committed by development practitioners/organizations, backed by strong political will there is an emerging encouraging trend, namely**:**

- ☞ *Growing commitment and policy priority at global and country levels*;
- ☞ *New and emerging/innovative technologies and business models*;
- ☞ *Better understanding of household cooking energy needs and sector dynamics*;
- ☞ *Increased financial resources towards access to MECS*; **and**
- ☞ *COVID-19 pandemic proves both challenges and opportunities for further investment in the clean cooking sector*.

In her presentation two-transition pathways towards universal clean cooking access by 2030 was illustrated as outlined below**:**

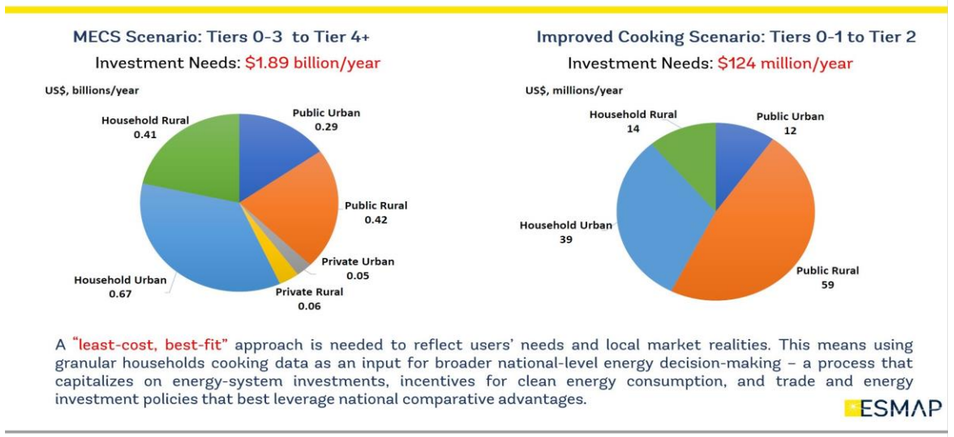


Figure-3: Transition pathways towards universal Modern Energy Cooking Services, and Improved Cooking Services

Dr. Zhang underscored three priority actions to achieve universal clean cooking access by 2030**:**

1. **Create high profile coalitions of political leaders at both global and national arenas to prioritize Modern Energy Cooking Services (MECS)**;
2. **Formalize cooking energy demand in national energy planning and strategies**; and
3. **Scale-up public and private financing for MECS**.

She underpinning the fundamental objectives of the World Bank Clean Cooking Fund, meant to provide the following support services**:**

- ❑ *Leverage World Bank's multilateral development finance and attract private sector investments in the clean cooking sector*;
- ❑ *Catalyze technology and business innovations by providing incentives for players across clean-cooking value chains*; **and**
- ❑ *Link incentive payments with verified results at the output, outcome, and impact levels*.

To achieve these objectives, she informed the participants that the World Bank has made available US$ 500 Million to catalyze US$ 2 Billion in investments with the aim to benefit 200 million people globally in the following interventions:

- **Supporting sizeable stream of businesses along the supply chain delivering clean cooking solutions**; and
- **Developing an impact bond market for the clean cooking sector to attract a broad range of funding sources**.

She concluded her presentation by indicating that the MRU countries could access these funding for cleaning cooking through the IDA initiative to support the subregion achieve universal clean cooking access.

Presentation: Prof. Ed Brown, *Professor of Global Energy Challenges, and Research Director of MECS Programme at Loughborough University*.

Prof. Ed Brown made a presentation on the Modern Energy Cooking Services (MECS) Programme. The title of his presentation was *"Challenging the Clean Cooking Narrative"* keeping the MRU Countries in perspective. His presentation focused on the implications of Biomass Cooking, which include effects on women and girls; environment; health related harzards; cost of accessing polluting fuel; effect of economies; and correlation with COVID-19.

Prof. Brown noted that a substantial share of cooking wood fuel is not harvested sustainably and that results to GHG emissions from non-renewable wood fuels for cooking amounting to about 1.9% to 2.3% of CO2 global emission as the burning of residential solid fuels account for up to 58% of global Black Carbon emissions. He also noted that other particles of incomplete combustion from cooking with non-clean fuels contribute to increasing CO2 in the anthropogenic global warming.

According to Prof. Brown, tackling this problem, which keeps growing with population growth, would require political prioritization (addressing health and climate change) on clean cooking, innovative financing, and business delivery models (LPG as a transitional fuel, ethanol and or electricity) to address both local and global implications.

One advantage of electric cooking is the opportunity it provides to tap into substantive investment capital, which is in direct contrast to other cooking approaches. Prof. Brown therefore mentioned that there is growing need to unleash a level of financial investment to reverse the current trend and power the shift to a zero-carbon economy.

To this end, £ 40 Million is allocated to the Modern Energy Cooking Services (MECS) Programme aiming to **break out of the "business-as-usual"** cycle of developments on clean cooking solutions i.e. electric, gas etc. with focus on six strategic outputs, namely**:**

Output I: **Evidence, research and insights** into the drivers and pathways for economies to transition to modern energy cooking services.

Output II: **New technologies** that make using electricity and gas more efficient, more practical, and more affordable for poor households.

Output III: **Innovation** in business models, financing and private sector delivery of modern energy cooking services.

Output IV: **SDG Global tracking** that included modern energy cooking services.

Output V: **Inclusion** of modern energy cooking services in international development assistance programming and lending; **and**

Output VI: **Changed narrative** on cooking for those involved in wider energy access policy and programming.

At the end of his presentation, Prof. Ed Brown, proffer the measures on how to promote electric cooking for clean cooking**:**

- *Promote the use of efficient electric cooking devises in grid-connected areas. Ensure that grid extension can facilitate electric cooking and keeping tariffs low*.
- *Support initial costing of appliances by exploring subsidization*.
- *Explore new forms of data-driven carbon finance for electric cooking*.

Discussant: Mr. Kimball Chen, *Chairman of the Global LPG Partnership*.

In his capacity as industry leader in the LNG and LPG sector, Mr. Kimball Chen underpinned the creation of the Global LPG Partnership (GLPGP) as a UN mandated Public Private Partnership, collaborating with developing countries and international institution to plan, finance and implement LPG projects.

With regards to cost effectiveness of LPG as a clean cooking option, Mr. Chen said that LPG requires less investment and time to implement as compared to electricity. He also unscored that LPG is quickly scalable, and an efficient proven ecosystem friendlier technology making it a fitting business model as a clean cooking option. Research has shown that LPG contributes to human and environmental wellbeing as it contributes to cleaner air, better health for women and children exposed to Household Air Pollution (HAP), reduce deforestation, eliminate black carbon emissions and hence a reduction in CO2 emission. Although LPG is sourced from oil and natural gas operations, switching from business-as-usual cooking with biomass to cooking with LPG is better for the climate and environment. Moreover, with the possibility of producing bioLPG from municipal solid waste agricultural residues, this will make LPG to be part of the long-term green transition and more attractive as a clean, affordable, cooking solution for Africa.

Considering its industrial capacity and supply availability, the positive role of LPG in clean cooking has been appreciated by global institutions like the IEA. This has resulted to IEA huge investment in large-scale increase use of LPG in Africa. Mr. Chen reported that recently, Norway issued a report supporting the use of LPG for clean cooking, and the UK issued a policy guidance supporting the deployment of LPG for clean cooking. The EU has been supporting national LPG sector development studies in several countries in Africa.

Considering this new development strides, hundreds of millions of US Dollars have been invested through public sector capital financing on clean cooking initiatives in Africa. Mr. Chen concluded that the private sector has also demonstrated willingness to scale-up investment in the LPG sector in Africa, hence, the need for regional study the LPG infrastructure for the MRU countries.

Discussant: Mr. Jonas Moberg, *Head of Government Affairs – Trafigura Group.*

In his intervention, Mr. Jonas Moberg informed participants that Trafigura Group dubbed LPG4SDG7 is a consortium of 16 private sector companies. LPG4SDG7 is a private sector Coalition accelerating access to cleaner energy for the world's poorest half's. Mr. Moberg said that the Coalition works with governments and other stakeholders on the enabling environment for attracting investment capital to market Liquefied Petroleum Gas ("LPG") for clean cooking.

Mr. Moberg's presentation focused on *"Market development through advocacy and sharing of good practices along the supply chain"*. He mentioned that according to the World Bank 2020 Report, about 4 billion people i.e., half the world's population lacks access to modern cooking services.

Based on these growing appalling statistics Mr. Moberg said the Trafigura was created therefore to address three objectives**:**

- *Fournir des solutions énergétiques plus propres et moins chères aux 4 milliards, la moitié de la population mondiale qui n'a pas accès à une cuisine propre*.
- *To help prevent the 4 million deaths annually and vast impact on women's and children's time and health caused by societal dependence on solid fuels for cooking. LPG is 90 % cleaner than charcoal*. **and**
- *To stop one of the main causes of deforestation. Firewood and charcoal is by far the most commonly used solid fuel, resulting in deforestation, losses of erosion control, biodiversity and flood protection, all adding to climate crisis*.

To achieve these objectives, Mr. Moberg said that the LPG4SDG7 Coalition is committed to helping achieve Sustainable Development Goal 7, for universal access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all, through growing markets for Liquefied Petroleum Gas ("LPG") for clean cooking. Therefore, the Coalition is committed to energy solutions with low or zero carbon emissions. Given that LPG has significant climate, health and environmental benefits over the traditional use of biomass, LPG should be considered therefore as a transition fuel with the long-term goal to be replaced by bioLPG, which has lower or zero carbon-emission.

To this end, plans are underway to establish in 2021 (year in progress) what will be **commercially viable** projects by developing a standardized list of the topics needed to be addressed, **blended finance approaches**, international developer viewpoints on **viable pricing regimes and tax policies, and advocacy and education strategies**. The framework of this initiative will make provision for supporters to be able to express their **support for the coalition** by making public statements, and or contribute financially to the collective effort of the Coalition.

To operationalize this plan, Mr. Moberg said Trafigura will convene for the first time Commercial and Development Banks, and Companies to finance LPG supply chain, which would necessitate developing**:**

- A framework for **bankable anchor** and beachhead LPG supply, terminal and power projects.
- Un guide et un ensemble de principes de financement mixte et concessionnel pour le GPL pour la cuisine **et**
- Un bref guide de bonnes pratiques pour les gouvernements permettant l'utilisation du GPL pour la cuisine
.

Mr. Jonas Moberg concluded his intervention by referencing supporting statements from global leaders in the renewable energy space.

"LPG4SDG7 is a critical new platform for mobilizing the necessary private sector investments for the rapid scale up of access to clean cooking services in developing countries. Millions of lives could be saved with such creative public-private partnerships".

Dr. Kandeh K. Yumkella, former UN Under-Secretary-General and Founder CEO of the Sustainable Energy for All.

"When commitment, knowledge and resources of global leaders unite, we can through the use of LPG at scale deliver clean cooking and Sustainable Development Goal 7 can be delivered."

Mr. Kimball Chen, *Chairman of the Global LPG Partnership*

"There are many exciting efforts underway to leverage increased electrification rates for electric cooking appliances, and innovative solutions that utilize renewable fuels such as processed biomass, biofuels and biogas. That said, the roughly half of the world's population that currently lacks access to modern cooking solutions will not gain access anytime soon without scaling up LPG usage. We firmly believe in the role of LPG as a scalable and clean transition fuel within what we expect to be a diverse energy mix for cooking in developing countries."

Mr. Peter George, Co-Managing Partner, SPARK+ Africa

"All of us in this coalition share a belief that we must step-up our efforts in addressing global warming and contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. At Trafigura, we are making significant investments in renewables, hydrogen and green ammonia, as part of our efforts to contribute to the energy transition. Unfortunately, these are not realistic alternatives for the hundreds of millions of people who lack access to clean energy and cook using biomass, resulting in poor health, large emissions and deforestation. Through this coalition, we are doing our part to ensure that this status quo is challenged, improving the environment and the quality of life of millions of Africans."

Mr. Patricio Norris, Co-Head LPG, Trafigura

- **Session III** – Mobilization of Political Action for Energy Transition

Co-Chaired: Mr. Nicholas Dunlop, *Secretary General of Climate Parliament and* **Mr. Stefan Schurig**, *Strategic Advisor to the Global Renewables Congress*

Mr. Nicholas Dunlop

Mr. Stefan Schurig

The Co-Chairs informed the participants that both the Climate Parliament (CP) and the Global Renewables Congress (GRC) have succeeded in creating a platform for experts to share recommendations with Members of Parliaments so that they could raise awareness on Renewable Energy (RE) and Clean Cooking (CC).

To legislate reforms on RE and CC, they mentioned that Parliamentarians are at the heart of the process for political mobilization. They therefore recognized the presence of Parliamentarians from the MRU countries to share their experience. Hon. Vincent Willie, Chair of Energy Committee from Liberia informed participants that access to energy remains a challenge for cooking. As a result, most people in Liberia use firewood and charcoal as the main sources of energy.

The Co-Chairs recommended that to save lives from the effect of Household Air Pollution (HAP) coming from the use of biomass, there is need for a carbon budget. The role of Parliamentarian to influence national budget to mainstream action to reduce carbon emission is key

Hon. Bärbel Höhn reiterate that to achieve energy transition there is need for a better energy framework addressing the wellbeing of the rural communities and sharing of best practices from other African countries.

The Co-Chairs concluded that energy transition goes beyond creating electrons, but contributes to addressing health, climate, economy and environmental issues and their multiple effects. They urged Parliamentarians to use their respective committees to influence policy change on RE and CC which will result to creating green jobs. Hon. Kandeh K. Yumkella informed participants that Sierra Leone has created a Climate Parliament to spearhead RE and CC in development process, a practice that other MRU countries could replicate.

- **Closing**

In his closing remark, Hon. Dr. Kandeh K. Yumkella recognized the participation of additional partners who were on the virtual event listening-in namely USAID Regional Office in Accra (Dr. Rockefeller Herisse); WHO (Maria of the HEPA initiative); Hivos (Eco Matser); ENERGIA (Sheila Oparaocha); TBI/Power Africa; Bboxx (Tessa Lee). He thanked Sahr Abraham Grass-Sessay of ILEM for availing the services of his Consultancy Firm in coordinating the MRU Renewable Energy and Clean Cooking Initiative for the past two years; MRU Secretariat Amb. Wesseh and Mr. Ahmed Diallo for the sustained collaboration with TENN in the past two years; IRENA for providing the hosting logistic and interpretation services at the 11th hour request to support; Naemie Dubbels of the World Future Council and the Global Renewables Congress for their financial and technical contribution towards the coordination of the MRU Renewable Energy and Clean Cooking initiative.

- **Way Forward / Next Steps**

While key barriers and challenges exist, the engagement of the MRU Secretariat and TENN with support from development partner has resulted to creating a platform at the level of the MRU sub-region with the aim to prioritize Renewable Energy and Clean Cooking. Through advocacy and lobbying, the MRU Secretariat and TENN will pursue the following actions**:**

☞ ***Establish Memorandum of Understanding between IRENA and the MRU Secretariat for technical assistance.***

☞ ***Support IRENA in defining an Action Plan to conduct MRU Subregional study on Renewable Energy.***

☞ ***Formalize TENN's advisory support to the MRU Secretariat through an agreed partnership framework.***

☞ ***Assist the MRU Secretariat to request for the World Bank IDA fund to support RE and CC in the Subregion.***

☞ **Follow-up on MECS and ESMAP to accompany the MRU study on RE and CC.**

☞ **Convene by 4th Quarter 2021 or 1st Quarter 2022 a ministerial meeting to prioritise RE and CC in the MRU.**

☞ **Encourage private sector engagement by through the Global LPD Partnership and the LPG4SDG7 initiative to help address the energy deficit in the MRU countries by having a regional energy integration LPG market.**

Event **Agenda**

7th Wednesday, 2021

Moderator – Hon. Dr. Kandeh K. Yumkella, Founder & CEO of The Energy Nexus Network (TENN)

09:00 – 09.20

- **Welcome Remarks:** Amb. Medina Wesseh, Secretary General, **MRU Secretariat**
- **Setting the Scene:** Hon. Bärbel Höhn, Special Representative for Energy in Africa, Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation & Development (**BMZ**)
- **Keynote Address:** Ms. Gauri Singh, Deputy Director General, **IRENA**

Session I – Growing MRU Renewable Energy Market

09:20 – 09.50

- **Presentation:** Rabia Ferroukhi, Director, Knowledge, Policy and Finance Center, **IRENA**
- **Discussant:** Mr. Carsten Hellpap, Energizing Development Programme **EnDev**
- **Q&A** Parliamentarians and RE & CC Focal Persons in the MRU

Session II – Scaling-up Access to Modern Energy Cooking Services

09:50 – 10.20

- **Presentation:** Ms. Yabei Zhang, World Bank Group - Modern Energy Cooking Services - State of play in the MRU
- **Presentation:** Ed Brown- MECS Programme of Loughborough University
- **Discussants:** Kimball Christopher Chen, Chairman of the **Global LPG Partnership** & Jonas Moberg, Head of Corporate Affairs **Trafigura**
- **Q&A** with parliamentarians and RE & CC Focal Persons in the MRU

Session III – Mobilization of Political Action for Energy Transition

10:20 – 10.50

- **Co-Chairs** & **Presenters:** Nicholas Dunlop, Climate Parliament/Stefan Schurig, Global Renewables Congress.
- **Statements by Parliamentarians / Energy Focal Person from MRU:** Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone

Closing and the Way Forward

10:50 – 11.00

- Amb. Medina Wesseh, Secretary General, MRU Secretariat
- Hon. Dr. Kandeh Yumkella, Founder & CEO, TENN

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