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**VIRTUAL POLICY DIALOGUE ON INCLUSIVE ENERGY TRANSITIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF SDG7**

Date: 22 September 2022 (Thursday) | Time: 2:00-4:30 PM IST

*Draft Concept Note*

**About World Sustainable Development Summit**

The World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) is the annual flagship Track II initiative organized by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI). Instituted in 2001, the Summit series has a legacy of over two decades for making 'sustainable development' a globally shared goal. Over the years, the Summit platform has brought together thought leaders, heads of state and government, scholars, corporates, youth groups, and civil society representatives from across the world. The Summit series has established itself as a responsible and an effective platform for mobilizing opinion-makers to drive ambition and advance pioneering actions to address some of the most relevant issues concerning sustainable development and climate change. The 22nd edition of the annual flagship event of The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)—the World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS)—will be held from 22-24 February 2023 in New Delhi. The Summit deliberations will focus on the umbrella theme: *Mainstreaming Sustainable Development and Climate Resilience for Collective Action.*

**About Act4Earth and SDG Charter**

Act4Earth initiative was launched at the valedictory session of WSDS 2022. Building on the discussions of WSDS, this initiative will seek to continuously engage with stakeholders from public and private spheres of life with agendas for global, regional, national, sub-national, and organizational levels. Under this initiative, TERI will engage in research activities which will systematically seek to identify and analyse good practices that can be taken up by governments for climate action and achieve the sustainable development goals. Given the vast scope of the theme of WSDS, the focus for analysis will be practices which have maximum impact across systems, sectors, and SDGs, including decision-making processes such as goals setting or even annual budgets. More details can be found here.

In September 2015, the General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDGs are a call for action by all countries to address prevailing inequalities while protecting the planet. These goals provide a framework with targets and relevant indicators which can be followed by governments, businesses, civil society, and the public to work together to build a better future for everyone. The Decade of Action calls for accelerate sustainable solutions to all the world's biggest challenges — ranging from poverty and gender to climate change, inequality and closing the finance gap. Prior to COVID-19 pandemic, progress in achieving SDG-linked targets was being made in many aspects, albeit not at the speed or scale required. But the global health crisis has either put a stop, or worse, has undone much of this

progress. The pandemic has shown that a health crisis has quickly exposed the fault lines in our existing systems and can trigger a human and socio-economic crisis. While the crisis is imperiling progress towards the SDGs, it also makes their achievement more urgent and necessary. Through SDG Charter, the research team contributes to more inclusive and ambitious policy frameworks towards green recovery policies and actions of governments that enhance environmental, social, and economic outcomes to build back better.

**Inclusive Energy Transitions and SDG 7**

SDG 7 refers to "Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all". According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), energy access is defined as "a household having reliable and affordable access to both clean cooking facilities and to electricity, which is enough to supply a basic bundle of energy services initially, and then an increasing level of electricity over time to reach the regional average". It is important to note that the nature of access is also qualified by being reliable and affordable enough to ensure the fulfilment of a basic bundle of energy needs. This helps to give a perspective to India's progress on SDG 7 according to which 99 percent of the population has access to electricity and 68 percent to clean cooking fuel. According to The Energy Progress Report 2022, India came second globally in its increase in renewable energy generation, while at the same time recording non-renewable energy generation increase by two times that amount. India also has among the highest use of biomass for energy, its share in total heat consumption highest in the world. While India has been taking significant strides in increasing accessibility to energy, and since nearly every household has access to electricity (with only 99.99 percent being electrified), reliability and quality of electricity is a factor that gets glossed over with the big numbers.

The concept of 'just transitions' in the context of energy supply has been gaining discursive traction. It is imperative that a systems perspective is taken, and energy demand side interventions is also planned to use the lens and filter of 'inclusivity'. Inclusive energy transitions can be defined as clean energy transitions that consider perspectives of demand side interventions including interventions that consider accessibility in transport systems, agriculture demand side interventions (DSMs) and DSMs in micro-, small, and medium enterprises. A major gap in decision-making and data availability pertains to gender and class inequalities of energy transitions, and thus there is a need to explore transitions framework from the lens of intersectionality. Over the years, the narrative on just transitions framework has moved away from the issue of job replacement and the associated costs that come with it, towards addressing broader injustices in the predominantly fossil-based energy systems. Apart from supply side interventions, demand side focus also needs a stronger attention by policymakers and civil society.

Thus, with this rationale, TERI is putting together a policy brief urging stakeholders to discuss how inclusive energy transitions is possible by affordability and inclusivity issues including in demand side sectors specifically focussing on gender dimensions, household energy access, agriculture, MSMEs and transport in G20 countries. Relatedly, this virtual policy dialogue is being organized to engage with stakeholders and experts on inclusive energy transitions in the context of SDG7 to solicit feedback and inputs for the policy brief.

Some of the guiding questions for the dialogue are as follows:

- How can clean energy transitions better factor gender dimensions?
- What are the implications of inclusive energy transitions in the specific sectors of household energy access (cooking and lighting), agriculture, MSMEs and transport?
- What are the barriers and challenges to inclusive energy transitions including gaps in disaggregated data?
- What new policy instruments can promote inclusive energy transitions that specifically focus on gender dimensions, household (cooking and lighting), agriculture, MSMEs, transport? What good practices exist in G20 countries?

**Format of the Event**

The dialogue will begin with welcome remarks that will set the context and apprise the audience of the expectations from the discussions. The TERI team will make a presentation on the main findings and proposed recommendations as outlined in the policy brief. This will be followed by a session on policy perspectives and roundtable discussions involving experts and stakeholders who will provide feedback and inputs on specific questions as listed in the concept note. In the final segment of the event, the discussions will be summarized, and next steps will be communicated. The team will also circulate a post-event questionnaire for any further inputs. The inputs provided by the experts will be duly acknowledged in the final policy brief prepared by the team.