

ARE Call for Action: Increase clean energy access in developing countries

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Today, the **Alliance for Rural Electrification (ARE)**, on behalf of the decentralised renewable energy industry working in developing countries, calls on all government leaders gathered at COP21 to take immediate, results-oriented and binding action to tackle climate change.

In particular, governments and public leaders the world over should concentrate their efforts on **cleaning up the way energy is produced and used, as at present this process accounts for more than two-thirds of global greenhouse gas emissions**. Concretely, this means that the **energy supply has to be powered by renewable sources**, and that the energy demand has to be mitigated through **energy efficiency**. This is true for developed and developing countries alike.

In the developing world, where **ARE and its Members concentrate their efforts to enable cost-effective and efficient access to clean electricity**, the fight against climate change actually also represents a great opportunity to establish a collaboration between the developed and developing world through partnerships and to leapfrog to a fairer and more prosperous society.

Indeed, **by acting decisively on renewable energy and energy efficiency, combined with more business enabling policies to facilitate clean access to energy and services, developing nations can drastically increase their population's well-being**, such as by enabling poverty reduction, local economic development and improvements in education, health and gender equality. Moreover, by engaging on this path, developing nations will be very well positioned to reap the full benefits of the population and economic growth in their own countries.

In order to help them realise clean access to energy and services, developing nations and their partners can count on the support of ARE and its membership, which since its foundation in 2006, has worked tirelessly to advance clean energy access in developing countries, speaking with all institutional and other actors to help improve the market conditions, and assisting businesses to realise clean energy projects. It is for this reason that ARE is recognised as the only business association partner of Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) and is an ardent supporter of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular objective 7 to 'ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all'.

Therefore, our expectations for the governments participating in COP21 can be summarised as follows:

1. In order to green the electricity supply and help realise the transition to a prosperous and sustainable society, **ARE calls on all decision-makers to invest in distributed renewable energy technologies, which are readily available to meet small to medium scale electricity demands, thus constituting a genuine clean solution which also contributes to climate resilience.**
2. In addition, **ARE expects a strong political and financial commitment to research and development (R&D)**, so that private actors are incentivised to continually improve renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies and services, as well as capacity building measures to bring people in the developing world into the position to take initiative and responsibility by themselves.

3. Finally, as the fight against climate change and the transition to sustainable societies necessitates a grand alliance between political, business and civil society actors, **ARE expects that broad consultation and coordination processes with all relevant actors become the norm**, to ensure that all voices can be heard and to facilitate a swift and efficient response to the world's most pressing challenge.

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*The **Alliance for Rural Electrification (ARE)** is an international business association representing 96 companies and NGOs from the decentralised energy sector working towards the integration of sustainable renewable energy solutions into rural electrification markets in developing and emerging countries. ARE is the accepted business partner organisation of SE4I. Find out more at www.ruralelec.org or contact the secretariat via are@ruralelec.org*