

Civil Society Organizations' Recommendations for the Africa Renewable Energy Initiative

In the following paragraphs, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have outlined their thoughts, recommendations, and proposal on relevant aspects of the Africa Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI). CSOs support AREI and its two main goals—providing universal access to clean, appropriate, and affordable energy, and helping African countries to leapfrog towards Renewable Energy (RE) systems. However, as the initiative is still in its infancy, CSOs want to contribute in shaping AREI. The three paragraphs below represent a collaborative effort undertaken by African and international CSOs and were discussed and approved on occasion of a CSOs workshop held in Bonn in November 2017.

This document is structured into three sections: 1.) General key principles of good governance; 2.) CSOs' suggestions for roles and responsibilities of AREI bodies; and 3.) Key proposals from CSOs for the operationalization of a well-functioning and transparent AREI.

1.) General key principles of good governance

CSOs propose a few general key principles of good governance, relevant to local decision-makers as well as to other levels and spheres of government involved in AREI:

Clarity and transparency

- These aspects shall ensure genuine, comprehensive, reliable, up-to-date, and appropriate information is made publicly available through regular reports, updates, and other channels of information, such as on the AREI website, by all official institutional AREI actors, i.e., the Board of Directors, the Independent Delivery Unit (IDU), the Technical Committee (TC), and governments (both hosts of programs/projects and supporters), and other involved, particularly public and/or private, financial institutions.
- Clear definition of responsibilities and terms of reference of all actors within AREI should be agreed by the actors and transparently disclosed.

Participation

- Diverse and meaningful public input in policy making, also regarding all RE programs/projects for and with AREI, is necessary. It helps local decision-makers consider different issues, perspectives, and options in the formulation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of their policies. The required elements include providing a formal space for participation in relevant fora, applying appropriate and democratically sufficient mechanisms to invite representative participation, ensuring inclusive and open processes, and taking the gathered input properly into account.

Accountability

- This refers to the needed clarity about the role of the various institutional stakeholders in decision-making. Accountability includes the systematic monitoring of RE programs/projects

and related processes, which will allow for a clear and justified basis for decisions and investments. Reliable legal systems will uphold public and investor interests.

Capacity

- The ability of government bodies to practice good governance, and of civil society to engage in decision-making, is a crucial part of capacity building, both on the local and national level. This includes the availability of suitable human and financial resources.

2.) CSOs' suggestions for roles and responsibilities of AREI bodies and relevant stakeholders

The Board of Directors

- AREI should be governed and its actions, budgets, and operational space should be approved by its Board. The Board should regularly and transparently be elected and meet at least four times a year. All proposed decisions and discussions should be published with the agenda on the AREI website and updated later to include the final decisions that have been made. Board Meetings should be webcast in order to enhance transparency. It remains to be seen whether the Board is better placed to be an "advisory" or a more actively leading "executive" board. The former option might be preferred in case the roles and responsibilities of other AREI institutional entities are soon well established and democratically and politically justified. The latter option might be the better one in case strong political support is needed vis-à-vis other powerful and influential bodies like third-party and governmental donors, international financial development institutions, and African governments. In any case, the Board should be responsible for reporting back to the public regularly on achieved targets and objectives as well as for identifying hurdles and obstacles for continued progress. The IDU Senior Management should report to the board on a regular basis. The AREI Board should also be responsible for drafting and agreeing on all rules of procedures for the AREI institutions including its own composition.

The Independent Delivery Unit

- The IDU should be responsible for the daily management of the AREI. It should be staffed appropriately with a sufficient working budget. The IDU staff should work closely with individual African governments, experts in the wider clean-energy community, and CSOs. One of its main purposes should be to identify continuously clean energy projects in African regions and countries that are brought to the attention of the IDU by the various African governmental and non-governmental stakeholders as well as by non-African donors for acceptance and funding based on the agreed criteria and yet-to-be-developed processes for attributing programs/projects to the AREI to meet the agreed capacity targets for 2020 and 2030. The IDU is advised to broaden its scope on identification of RE projects towards developing larger programmatic RE approaches that might function as the logical overlay on the individual country perspectives with respect to technological potentials, economic needs, social requirements, and CSO demands as appropriate. Proposed programs/projects should be available on the AREI website for input by the public for a distinct amount of time before the AREI decides to bring these programs/projects to the Board for approval (or not) at its next session.

The Technical Committee

- The TC should be staffed by governmental representatives, RE experts from the region, and CSO representatives appointed by the AREI Board. The CSO representatives should be nominated through a transparent selection process amongst the CSOs working on the AREI. The TC's composition should be transparent and members elected for a period of four years. It should regularly advise the IDU on incoming project proposals by governments (or other entities) and consult with the IDU on other programmatic and strategic topics with respect to RE development on the continent. While the IDU should be more responsible for the political and strategic debate on RE programs/projects and developments in African countries, the TC should have the role of monitoring and evaluating the specifics of the programs/projects. The TC should also shape and formulate the criteria, parameters, and processes for sustainable RE development in Africa that need to be coordinated with the IDU and approved by the Board before implementation. These criteria as well as safeguards should also be open for public input by CSOs and others in a transparent way, e.g., via a review period for comments on the websites as it has been implemented for many other similar processes.

The IDU host

- It must be ensured that the IDU hosting organization allows for and does not interfere with the IDU tasks and activities. Full independence of the IDU from its hosting organization must be ensured.

The Trust Fund

- The AREI Board should decide on the usage of any funds within the AREI Trust Fund (in consultation with the IDU and the TC). It must be ensured that the Trustee, primarily responsible for the administration of the funds, has no decision power over the usage of the funds (i.e., the Trustee is not allowed to decide how the funds within the AREI Trust Fund are allocated). Moreover, it is of high importance to ensure that there exist no conflicts of interest between the Trustee and the AREI Trust Fund itself.

International donors

- International donors to AREI and African RE program/project representatives should be represented in the AREI Board in an appropriate way as decided by the Board.

Observers

- Observers from the CSO community, especially those from the African continent, should be allowed to attend the Board Meetings.

Engagement with CSOs

- A process of engaging with the international CSO community and the Board must be institutionalized as it is current practice within many other similar initiatives (e.g., the Green Climate Fund or the Adaption Fund).

3.) Key proposals from CSOs for the operationalization of a well-functioning and transparent AREI

Establish the IDU as a platform for activities related to Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency on the African continent

- Like some of the other previous initiatives, AREI may fail or may produce mitigated results if existing hurdles are not removed. Common bottlenecks include, but are not limited to, the lack of political will and vision, flawed regional or national energy policies, technical ignorance or/and insufficient skill training and education for implementation and maintenance of a project, absence of financial schemes and incentives, institutional weaknesses in implementing projects, and inappropriate legal frameworks. There is a need to create the enabling conditions in countries for RE and Energy Efficiency (EE) measures to provide a level playing field. This requires overcoming the “early development phase” challenges which are being ignored by many countries. The other reason is that RE projects are being anchored in countries without ensuring that this process takes place within a comprehensive framework which actually advocates for a strong “programmatic” approach by AREI in addition to the specific projects. Therefore, the IDU would be in an excellent position to develop a living on-line document on analysing those more programmatic and political constraints for each African country and plotting those against the advantages and potentials in a more detailed SWOT analysis. Generating those “score cards,” the IDU/AREI, in cooperation with other initiatives and platforms, becomes both a watchdog for good domestic structures and an intellectual think tank that can actually advise African governments and donors on the most efficient, appropriate, and cost-effective RE technology implementation in any country on the continent.

AREI should strongly support the development of national Renewable Energy frameworks, action plans, and long-term visions

- Implementing AREI requires national RE target setting as well as the development of national frameworks that are based on money-against performance as well as inclusive, participatory principles.
- To ensure the genuine operationalization of AREI’s principles and follow up on AREI’s key features and ambition to lead to transformative change, a strong emphasis needs to be put on strengthening policy, regulatory, support, and incentives frameworks first, before providing support on project development and financing of RE projects. Robust policies are the basis for achieving wide-scale adoption of a secure, sustainable, and economically sound RE system. In order for RE policies and programs to succeed, they have to be conceived and implemented as part of an action plan or package of measures. This should come with a clear roadmap towards achieving success, with the enabling conditions put in place and partners on board. It should also include suitable monitoring and evaluation indicators and approaches to track progress over time. Given the ambition that AREI aims to achieve, these indicators should not be limited to the installed capacity of RE. Rather they should focus on development indicators such as the number of people that have gained access to reliable, affordable, modern, and efficient energy services; the number of jobs and type of careers that will be created; as well as the level of economic and energy security that will be reached

in the different countries. As part of the process to develop a roadmap and action plan, policy-makers should ask themselves at least three fundamental questions¹:

- What? Scoping and prioritizing policy and program objectives and instruments
 - How? Defining in which ways to support policy and program implementation
 - Who? Creating a framework to deliver effective governance
- African countries should be invited to submit national action plans/roadmaps for a first phase of implementation. AREI/IDU should support the development of national action plans, roadmaps, long-term vision building, RE target setting via capacity building measures, and knowledge generation. In this context, the strategic oversight, i.e., the coordination between different regions, countries, and actors, is an important task AREI should fulfil.

Comprehensive transparency measures need to be implemented

- Whenever an important decision will be made by any official body of AREI such as the Board of Directors, the TC, or the IDU, e.g., about new programs/projects, composition of seats in the respective institution, new or/and revised criteria for projects, budgetary issues etc., the agenda and documents for the discussion need to be announced beforehand on the AREI website, as does the final decision afterwards. Therefore, a publicly available “AREI schedule” should be implemented on the AREI website.
- AREI needs to list transparently programs/projects on its website that are a) finally counted towards the stated criteria and capacity goals either in the context of AREI compliant attributed activities or financed from the AREI Trust Fund, b) rejected or delayed, and c) received in the pipeline for further evaluation. Full documentation of the programs/projects by the support-seeking African country and/or the donor respectively, is necessary for stakeholder information and informed contribution and support from the CSO community.
- Detailed data about future programs/projects that are found to be potentially eligible under AREI need to be made publicly available on the AREI website. Information should include program/project description, e.g., size, location, technology, expected investment, and total project costs (CAPEX, OPEX, LCOE etc.); envisaged outcome of the program/project, Social Environmental Impact Assessments (SEIA); proof of a meaningful consultation processes with affected and benefitting local and other communities; funding and financing source(s); and reasoning as to why the program/project is thought to contribute to AREI goals and adheres to its guiding principles. Support channels that will be used for programs/projects under AREI, i.e., bilateral international cooperation under AREI-compliant attributed activities, the AREI Trust Fund, or/and other IFI or development finance institutions need to be clearly indicated, as do domestic or/and international private financing, etc.
- While it is welcomed that Board Meetings are opened for observers, AREI should webcast all Board Meetings to enhance outreach of and trust in the initiative.

CSO representation supporting AREI activities and bodies needs to be institutionalized

- Given the political relevance of AREI, CSO representatives are prepared to meet with AREI institutional bodies and staff of IDU/TC in a formal and informal way, whatever is most

¹ For full elaboration, please find WFC's policy paper: “Implementing the African Renewable Energy Initiative: Lessons Learned from Renewable Energy Pioneers”, February 2016, Authors: Anna Leidreiter and Renilde Becque

adequate. To be effective, meetings and information exchange need to happen regularly, e.g., twice a year.

- The IDU, responsible for the recommendation of members of the TC, needs to develop a list with national and international clean energy experts from the CSO community who can closely work with and assist the various AREI governing bodies, particularly the TC and the IDU. Resulting from that, the TC should include CSO experts as appropriate as full members with equal voting rights and access to all documents.

Process of attributing AREI-compliant activities needs to be developed and made transparent

- The exact process of attributing programs/projects to the AREI Criteria needs to be stated by the respective host of the project/program upfront in order to ensure transparency. Right now, AREI Criteria are more or less a collection of issues within the realm of energy/energy efficiency. As it seems to be unrealistic for a single program/project to address all of the listed criteria, the exact process of assessing a program/project based on these criteria needs to be made transparent.
- Within the Governing Instrument (GI) document, it is stated that “AREI may use assessments pursued by other entities in order to streamline its own assessment”. This passage needs to be clarified.

The following organizations support this document and its content:

Organization	Contact
Abibiman Foundation	amoatengken@gmail.com
ActionAid International	Brandon.Wu@actionaid.org
Africa Coalition For Sustainable Energy and Access (ACSEA)	abnjamnshi@yahoo.com
Bread for the World	Joachim.Fuenfgelt@brot-fuer-die-welt.de
Climate Action Network Africa	kaboisaack@gmail.com
Climate Action Network Europe	maeve@caneurope.org
Climate Action Network South Africa	jkachinga.can@gmail.com
Climate Action Network Tanzania	sixbert@cantz.or.tz
Climate Action Network Uganda	kaboisaack@gmail.com
Ecological Christian Organisation (ECO)	kaboisaack@gmail.com
GenderCC Southern Africa	ndivile@gendercc.org.za
Germanwatch	Klawitter@germanwatch.org
National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE) - Uganda	kameseus@yahoo.com
Oxfam	jkowalzig@oxfam.de
Pan-African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA)	mithika@pacja.org
Réseau Climat et Développement	aissatou.enda@gmail.com
World Future Council (WFC)	anna.leidreiter@worldfuturecouncil.org
World Wide Fund For Nature (WWF)	fcarvalho@wwfint.org