



# EEAP WEBINAR 7: SUMMARY NOTES

## EVALUATION OF SDG7 POLICIES AND PROGRAMS IN ASIA PACIFIC – SESSION II

On January 31, 2024, the Energy Evaluation Asia Pacific (EEAP) hosted the second session of its webinar series, dedicated to the "Evaluation of SDG7 Policies and Programs in Asia Pacific." This enlightening webinar featured two distinguished speakers: Dayyan Shayani, a Statistician at the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), and Sohini Mookherjee, Lead at Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) and CLEAR South Asia.

Dayyan Shayani presented an overview of the progress toward the SDG7 goal in Asia Pacific since 2015, drawing on available data for the six SDG7 indicators. Sohini's presentation delved into evidence from ongoing Randomized Control Trials (RCTs) related to energy access in India, offering key takeaways for policymakers involved in implementing energy policies.

The webinar provided a valuable platform for knowledge-sharing and learning about the advancement of SDG7 in the Asia Pacific region. It underscored the importance of employing robust evaluation methods to generate evidence on the impact of policies and programs. This document summarizes the key discussion points from the webinar.

### Webinar Agenda

Time (IST)	Sessions/Speakers
10:00-10:05 am	<b>Welcome Remarks &amp; Context Setting</b>  <i>Edward Vine, Affiliate, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL) and Steering Committee Member, Energy Evaluation Asia Pacific (EEAP)</i>
10:05-10:45 am	<b>Presenters</b>  1. <b>Dayyan Shayani</b> , Statistician, United Nations ESCAP Statistics Division. <i>"Is Asia Pacific progressing on SDG7?"</i>

	2. <b>Sohini Mookherjee</b> , Lead at Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab(J-PAL) and CLEAR South Asia. <b>“Lessons Learned about SDG7 Evaluation”</b>
10:45-11:00 am	<b>Moderated Audience Q&amp;A</b> Moderated by <b>Edward Vine</b> , Affiliate, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL) and Steering Committee Member, Energy Evaluation Asia Pacific (EEAP)
11:00 am	<b>Concluding Comments &amp; Vote of thanks</b> <b>Edward Vine</b> , Affiliate, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL) and Steering Committee Member, Energy Evaluation Asia Pacific (EEAP)

## Introduction and Context Setting

Edward Vine, Affiliate, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL) and Steering Committee Member, Energy Evaluation Asia Pacific (EEAP)



Edward Vine, a member of the Steering Committee for EEAP, cordially greeted the participants and speakers, introduced EEAP and provided a context of the webinar on the evaluation of SDG7.

### **Context:**

Providing a background of the webinar, Edward shared that as a key constituent of SDG7, energy efficiency contributes directly or indirectly to achieving all the other SDGs, many of which are interconnected across the three dimensions of environmental sustainability, human development and sustainable growth. Edward also shared the importance of evaluation for SDGs, and highlighted some of the key challenges in evaluating SDGs including the complexity of the goals with multiple actors, objectives and programs and the difficulties in evaluating intersectionality, and evaluating topics related to vulnerability, exclusion and gender. He further shared about the unique opportunities for SDGs evaluation.

### **Introduction to Energy Evaluation Asia Pacific (EEAP)**

Ed also introduced EEAP to the participants. Established as a non-profit organization in 2018, EEAP is driven by a clear mission: to take a leadership role in advancing the practice and capacity for objective evaluation within the energy efficiency and renewable energy program and policy sphere.

EEAP actively pursues its mission by organizing a range of initiatives, including workshops, conferences, webinars, websites, and other web-based tools. These efforts are strategically designed to nurture the growth of self-sustaining evaluation communities throughout the Asia-Pacific region.

EEAP's leadership is characterized by two distinguished committees: a dynamic nine-member Steering Committee and an Advisory Committee consisting of 25 members representing 18 countries. This collaborative structure ensures that EEAP effectively fulfills its mission and promotes the widespread adoption of rigorous evaluation practices in the energy efficiency and renewable energy sectors.

Furthermore, Ed also shared updates about the second installment of the SDG7 webinar, planned for 31<sup>st</sup> of January and encouraged attendees to stay updated on EEAP's events through official website and social media platforms.

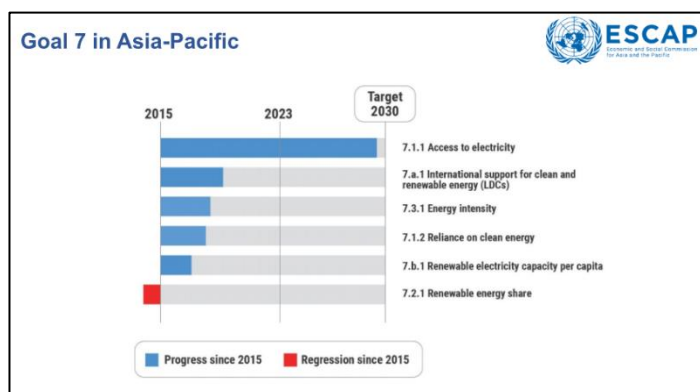
## Presentation by Speakers

### Is Asia Pacific progressing on SDG7?

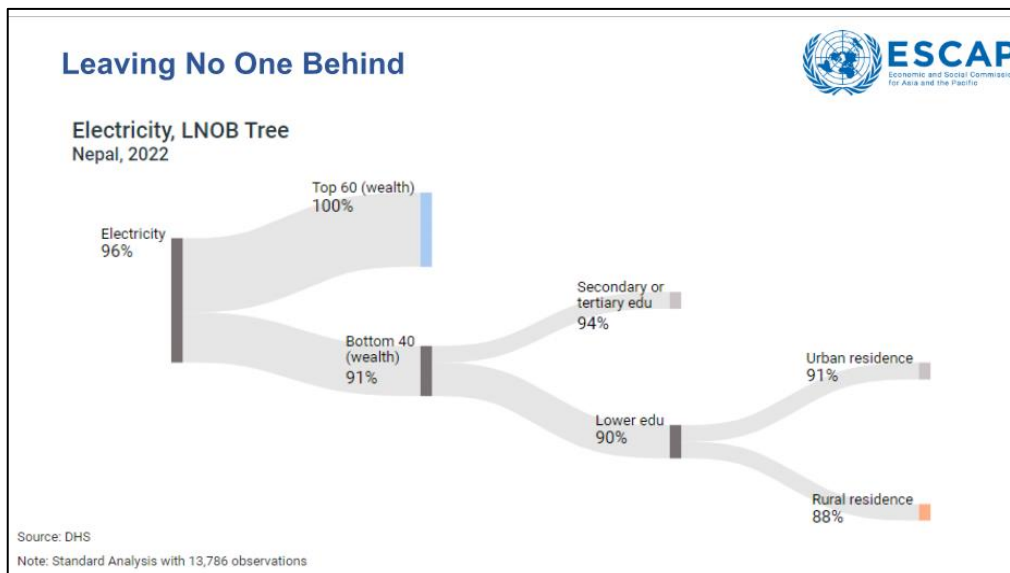
*Dayyan Shayani, Statistician, Statistics Division, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP)*



Dayyan Shayani delivered an overview of the advancements made toward achieving the SDG including SDG7 since 2015, utilizing available data for the six SDGs indicators. Citing the most recent report of UNESCAP, he shared that none of the SDGs are likely to be achieved by 2030. He emphasized that SDG7 stands out as the sole goal for which data is accessible for all its indicators. It looks like SDG7 has made a lot of progress and is one of the tops in the region. However, most of the progress is driven by indicator 7.1.1, the access to electricity. While strides have been made in other indicators, such as reliance on clean energy (cooking), renewable electricity capacity per capita, energy intensity, and renewable energy per capita, there has been a regression in the indicator measuring the share of renewable energy in total final energy consumption since 2015. Dayyan also examined country-level contributions to the lack of progress for each indicator, for instance, 76% of the 53 million people without access to electricity in the Asia Pacific region are in Myanmar, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, and India. Moreover, data shows that rural areas in these countries are the most affected.



After providing updates on indicator progress, Dayyan highlighted key challenges, including the absence of targets for all SDG indicators, inconsistencies between SDG indicators and those employed in national and sector plans, a lack of systematic monitoring of national plans, and insufficient disaggregated data and analysis to identify vulnerable populations. He concluded his presentation by sharing several key initiatives by UNESCAP, such as the National SDGs Tracker, Leaving No One Behind tool that analyses micro data from surveys to identify which populations might be at risk of being left out, and Open Data Dissemination, and Epic framework to enhance the integration of SDGs into national and sectoral plans.



## Lessons Learned about SDG7 Evaluation



*Sohini Mookherjee, Lead at Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) and CLEAR South Asia*

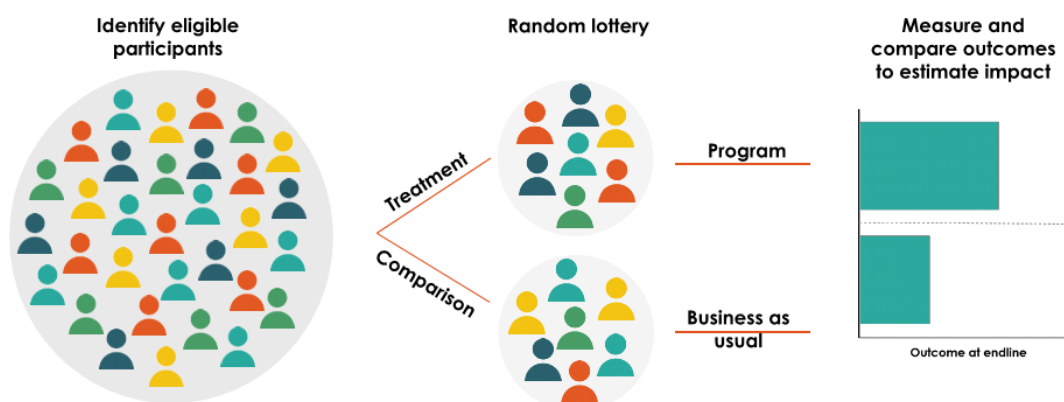
Sohini initiated her presentation by addressing critical policy challenges associated with ensuring access to clean energy and electricity. She underscored the significance of energy for global growth while highlighting the stark reality that 770 million people lack access to electricity, and nearly 90 million struggle to afford it. With low payment capacities, fossil fuel is going to meet much of the growth in energy demand in developing countries. But that's linked to another challenge faced by the policy makers: i.e., fossil fuels as the main source of energy generation creates pollution, which poses serious consequences both environment and health. So, the key policy challenge is to ensure that people around the world have access to reliable and affordable energy needed for economic growth and human development without putting the environment and climate at risk.

Sohini emphasized that global evidence supports the positive impact of electricity access on people's lives, but the impact is dependent on households' ability to make use of the energy which is made available.

Furthermore, Sohini highlighted the variable impact of gaining electricity based on three factors: 1) the amount of energy households or firms can afford; 2) complementary investments; and 3) reliability. To address these complexities, she advocated for rigorous impact evaluations to equip policymakers with crucial information for evidence-based decision-making. Drawing from her experience, she shared a case study from Bihar, India, where J-PAL collaborated with the Government to test the efficacy of group payment incentives for revenue collection. Additionally, she provided insights from Cape Town, South Africa, focusing on the effects of smart and prepaid metering.

In conclusion, Sohini offered two key takeaways: (1) Couple the rollout of programs, policies, or innovations with sound, rigorous evaluation to understand impacts along the way, before scaling; and (2) Draw from and adapt existing evidence from other areas, to inform policy design effectively by using a "generalizability framework" i.e., leveraging causal pathways from global evidence on human behavior.

## Randomized evaluations use random assignment to mimic the counterfactual and estimate a program's impact



**Key advantage of randomized evaluations (or RCTs):** Due to random assignment, members of the treatment and comparison groups do not differ systematically at the outset of the evaluation. Thus, any difference that subsequently arises between them can be attributed to the program, rather than to other factors.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Evaluation of SDG7 - Towards Sustainable Energy for All (3)**
  - Date: March 20, 2024 (Wednesday) | Time: 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM IST (Indian Standard Time)
  - **Registration Link:**  
<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUrcu6uqzliHNCPbSosncDUCmaZS5-o2TtB>

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