



9-11 FEBRUARY 2021



With their future at stake, youth call for faster action on a clean energy transition at first-ever SEforALL Youth Summit

Winner of youth SDG7 competition announced, with new scholarships also launched at academic fair

Vienna, 11 February 2021 — Young leaders from around the world issued a clear call to action to reset the energy transition, and they urged more young people to join them in demanding bolder clean energy and climate progress at the first [SEforALL Youth Summit, which](#) concluded today.

Hosted by [Sustainable Energy for All \(SEforALL\)](#) in partnership with the [Clean Cooking Alliance](#) and [EM-ONE Energy Solutions](#), the virtual Summit was organized by youth, for youth. More than 2,000 delegates from over 120 countries registered to discuss topics including gender equality, industrialization and clean cooking access to support progress on Sustainable Development Goal 7 (SDG7) – access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all – and the Paris Agreement on climate.

Addressing youth delegates in the opening keynote, **Amina J. Mohammed**, United Nations **Deputy Secretary-General**, said it was unacceptable for governments to continue to build polluting economies of the past by investing in fossil fuels: “Young people understand the links between sustainable development and climate justice. You have risen to the forefront as advocates and innovators in bringing sustainable energy solutions to homes, communities and countries.”

A highlight of the Summit was the [Troubleshooting for SDG7 Finals](#), which called for youth-led technology or policy ideas to support SDG7 progress. Launched by SEforALL ahead of the event, 133 proposals from representatives of 42 countries were received, and three finalists from Cameroon, Nigeria and China were identified by a panel of judges.

Following a live pitch competition, **Adekoyejo Kuye, Uzochukwu Mbamalu, Charles Aliozo and Chigozie Enemoh** from Nigeria were announced as the winners and will now receive USD 2,500 funding to support their innovation. Their proposal was for a solar-powered cold storage unit that used one compressor for multiple applications, helping smallholder farmers with food cool chains to reduce food loss. The solution could also be extended to keep vaccines safe. Speaking on their win, the team said: “If youth don’t care and act to bring about SDG7, we will be the ones to bear the negative impacts in the near future. We have what it takes to bring about change—all we have to do is take action.”

Damilola Ogunbiyi, CEO and Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Sustainable Energy for All and Co-Chair of UN-Energy, called for young people to be even bolder in their actions to secure a clean energy transition that leaves no one behind: “As the largest youth generation in history, these young energy leaders are our future—and what a bright future it is. That is why I strongly believe engaging youth in the energy transition is not just desirable, it is *essential*. We must maximize their incredible innovation, passion and commitment to help create real change so we can meet our global climate and energy goals.”

A virtual career advisory and academic fair also connected youth delegates with experts and universities from around the world to discuss energy-related opportunities and courses. The Florence

School of Regulation (FSR) also announced 10 new scholarships to their 14-week [Regulation of the Power Sector training course](#) that delegates could apply for. Over 30 institutions took part, including Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs, Indian Institute of Science, Fundação Getulio Vargas (FGV) Brazil, Enel Group, Camco Clean Energy and the ASEAN Centre for Energy.

The outcomes of the three-day Summit will now feed directly into key SEforALL-led events in 2021 to drive more ambitious action towards universal energy access, including the [UN High-Level Dialogue on Energy](#) in September and the UN climate change conference, [COP26](#), in November. This includes a set of recommendations outlining how to place a clean energy transition at the heart of the youth climate action movement developed during the SDG7 Youth Roundtable session with the **UN Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, Jayathma Wickramanayake**.

In her closing remarks, **Damilola Ogunbiyi** also announced a new upcoming campaign from SEforALL. The 'Be Bold' campaign will launch in March to promote more ambitious progress on SDG7. **UN Young Leader for the SDGs, AY Young**, who performed his song 'Save the Planet' at the Summit, was also announced as the Youth Champion for the campaign.

Further quotes:

Vanessa Nakate, Ugandan climate activist, said: "There are young people already doing projects to achieve SDG7 but they are doing this on their own and are struggling to get support and funding. We cannot have climate justice without sustainable energy for all."

Mir Islam, EM-ONE Energy Solutions CEO, said: "There are 1.2 billion people on this planet between the ages of 15 and 24 who are hungry for a better world – and these young people are equipped with passion, information and platforms that no generation before has had. As industry veterans and experts, it is our role to share our knowledge and amplify the voice of these inspiring youths in the energy transition by making room and giving them a seat at the table."

Dymphna van der Lans, Clean Cooking Alliance CEO, said: "I am honoured the Clean Cooking Alliance was able to co-host the first-ever SEforALL Youth Summit. This is a critical year with many high-level conversations around climate and energy taking place. Kicking off 2021 by elevating youth voices is a great start."

You can follow [#YouthLeadSDG7](#) on social media.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Contact

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About Sustainable Energy for All

[Sustainable Energy for All \(SEforALL\)](#) is an international organization that works in partnership with the United Nations and leaders in government, the private sector, financial institutions, civil society and philanthropies to drive faster action towards the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 7 (SDG7) – access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all by 2030 – in line with the Paris Agreement on climate. SEforALL works to ensure a clean energy transition that leaves no one behind and brings new opportunities for everyone to fulfill their potential.

SEforALL is led by Damilola Ogunbiyi, CEO and Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Sustainable Energy for All and Co-Chair of UN-Energy. Follow her on Twitter [@DamilolaSDG7](https://twitter.com/DamilolaSDG7). For more information, follow [@SEforALLorg](https://www.seforall.org).

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