



Botswana Climate Change Network

Empowering communities for meaningful climate action

Civil Society Statement on Advancing Renewable Energy

Transition in Botswana

Empowering Civil Society To Track and Understand Renewable Energy Landscape – Policy Development, Deployment and Implementation

Introduction

We, the undersigned representatives of civil society organisations (CSOs) in Botswana, convened in Maun on 22 March 2023 to deliberate on the best approaches to accelerate the renewable energy transition in our country. Acknowledging the existing efforts and strategies, we are united in our commitment to ensuring a people-centred energy transition. This statement outlines our collective suggestions and commitments to propel Botswana toward a sustainable future.

Key Points of Agreement

1. Policy and Implementation Alignment:
 - We recognize the need for policies that are developed from the ground up, reflecting local contexts and realities. CSOs will advocate for the creation of inclusive policies that engage community inputs from the inception phase.
 - It is imperative to ensure that every renewable energy project implemented in Botswana has a robust monitoring and evaluation plan for climate and social impacts, with transparent feedback mechanisms to the communities.
2. Community Engagement and Education:
 - Grassroots education is paramount. We call for practical, context-specific education programs that start at the community level.
 - Renewable energy (RE) should be integrated into the technical college curricula as a standalone subject, providing practical and applied knowledge to the youth.
3. Affordability and Sustainability:
 - Renewable energy initiatives must be affordable and sustainable. Projects should prioritise cost-effective solutions that communities can easily adopt and maintain, such as artisanal biogas digesters.
 - We urge the government to ensure that lighting and other RE solutions are affordable and durable for the population.
4. Gender and Human Rights Considerations:



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- Climate change is intrinsically linked to human rights issues, including gender-based violence. Women and vulnerable groups must be included in all levels of planning and implementation to ensure equitable benefits from RE projects.
5. Leadership and Cultural Context:
- In Botswana, local leaders play a crucial role in community mobilization. We advocate for the inclusion of traditional and community leaders in the planning and implementation of RE projects to leverage their influence.
 - Efforts should be made to shift mindsets and build a culture of sustainability and accountability within both the government and the citizenry.
6. Practical and Localized Approaches:
- We emphasize the importance of practical literacy in RE technologies. Projects should be designed to be relevant to the specific contexts of different districts and communities.
 - Engaging local youth in the development of RE projects will create employment opportunities and ensure that projects are grounded in local knowledge and needs.
7. Funding and Support Mechanisms:
- There is a critical need for targeted funding for climate-change-focused projects. We call for the establishment of dedicated funds for grassroots RE initiatives.
 - Government schemes like Ipelegeng and Twantsho Borukhutlhi should be leveraged for grassroots awareness-building on climate change and RE.

Conclusion

As CSOs dedicated to advancing renewable energy and climate justice in Botswana, we pledge to continue our collaboration, advocacy, and grassroots engagement. Our collective efforts will ensure that the renewable energy transition is inclusive, sustainable, and beneficial to all citizens, particularly those in the most vulnerable communities. Together, we can drive Botswana toward a resilient and sustainable future.

Endorsed by: