

# Evidence for Action Panel

## Refugees and Energy Access: Policy Proliferation and Institutional Confusion

22<sup>nd</sup> July 2021

Evidence for Action: Aligning the Climate and SDG Agendas  
Online International Research Symposium

Hajar Al-Kaddo and Panel Speakers



**Humanitarian Engineering and Energy for Displacement**

# Refugees and SDG7: Policy Proliferation and Institutional Confusion

Keynote Presentation for Evidence in Action Conference

22<sup>nd</sup> July 2021

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in Situations of Displacement (GPA)



# Overview and Introduction



1. Overview of energy for refugees
2. Humanitarian energy governance
3. Changing landscape and regime complexity
4. Institutional confusion



## Brief Introduction

- ❖ Refugee camps in Africa, Asia and the Middle East.
- ❖ Covering electricity and cooking.
- ❖ For example: solar lanterns, mini-grids, cookstoves, streetlights, diesel generators, etc.
- ❖ Collaborate with the UN-led Global Platform of Action for Sustainable Energy Solutions in Situations of Displacement (the GPA), UNHCR, IOM, and UNITAR.
- ❖ Practical and academic work important in this sector. So the panel will share reflections from both academics and practising humanitarians.



# Humanitarian Energy 101

- ❖ Humanitarian Energy.
- ❖ Cover a range of displacement contexts: refugees, IDPs, migrants.
- ❖ Differences in locations: East Africa focus, but also worked in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Jordan, Lebanon and North Africa.
- ❖ Focus of today's presentation: institutions governing energy access for refugees.
- ❖ Critical elements of governance: who, how, regime complexity.
- ❖ Practical work with the GPA, also cover data and quantitative metrics within humanitarian energy.
- ❖ E.g.: humanitarian energy baseline work with UNHCR and IOM. [Online](#).

## Humanitarian energy: energy access in humanitarian settings

“Institutions, policies, programmes, global initiatives, actions and activities which use a range of sustainable and fossil fuel energy sources in contexts of displacement, to meet the energy needs of people in camps and urban settings, self-settled refugees, host communities, and internally displaced people” (Rosenberg-Jansen, 2020, p17). Including the use of a range of energy sources across all contexts of displacement, and the energy needs of people in camps and urban settings, self-settled refugees, host communities and internally displaced people. Humanitarian energy displacement covers needs during emergencies and protracted situations, and all populations impacted by war, famine, violence and persecution, climate change, and natural disasters. While energy for displacement is often used as a neutral term, humanitarian energy is often being used to align with progressive ideals on renewable energy and emerging lessons from the energy access sector on energy access rights, sustainability, and leaving no-one behind in the transition to modern energy access.

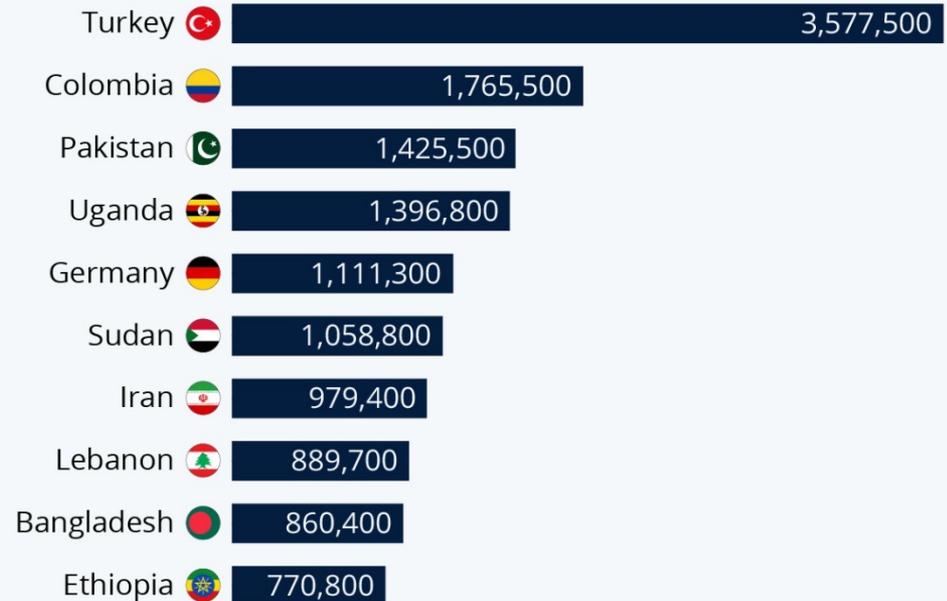
Source: Al-Kaddo, H. and Rosenberg-Jansen, S. (2021) Definitions and Differences: The Evolving Space of Energy Access in Humanitarian Energy. HEED Briefing Paper. [Online](#).

# Refugees, Asylum Seekers, Displaced People

- ❖ Over 80 million displaced people & refugees worldwide (end 2020). Roughly:
  - 50 m internally displaced persons
  - 25 m refugees
  - 3 m Palestinian refugees (under UNRWA)
  - 2 m asylum seekers
- ❖ Over 80% of these live in low to middle income countries.
- ❖ At the end of 2019 there were only 133,094 refugees in the UK.
- ❖ Europe is dealing with a tiny number of people compared to the global whole. But developing countries are struggling to cope.

## The Countries Hosting the Most Refugees

Number of refugees being hosted as of mid-2020



Excludes Palestine refugees under UNRWA's mandate.

Source: UNHCR



## Energy Access in Refugee Camps Summary

- ❖ Many people living in informal settlements or refugee camps.
- ❖ Short-term dwellings: tents, small shelters made of mud or sometimes wood.
- ❖ In middle-east, sometimes prefabricated shelters such as the IKEA shelter.
- ❖ Very little access to energy in households.
- ❖ Usually very basic lighting and almost no electricity (tier 1 or less).
- ❖ Often three-stone fires or cookstoves.
- ❖ In middle east, some gas cookstoves and more access to electricity. E.g.: refugees camps in Jordan.
- ❖ Some solar streetlighting and community access but very patchy.
- ❖ Institutions often powered by inefficient and polluting diesel generators.



# Actors Involved

## Humanitarian Sector

**Humanitarian Agencies:** e.g.: UNHCR.

**UN Food Agencies:** e.g.: WFP, FAO.

**Humanitarian System Actors:**  
e.g.: OCHA, IASC, clusters, ICRC.

**Implementing Partners:** e.g. NRC, Mercy Corps, Oxfam.

**Humanitarian Agencies:** e.g.: IOM

## Donors and Governments

**Donors:** e.g. FCDO, SIDA, NORCAP, IKEA Foundation, EU.

**Other UN and Multi-lateral Agencies:** e.g.: UNITAR, World Bank, UNDP, UNEP.

**National Governments:** e.g. Ministries and regulators in Kenya, Rwanda, Jordan.

**Research partners:** e.g. Loughborough University, Chatham House, UNEP DTU.

- ❖ Many different types of institutions
- ❖ Also many different individual (competing?) institutions
- ❖ Differing remits, overlapping responsibilities

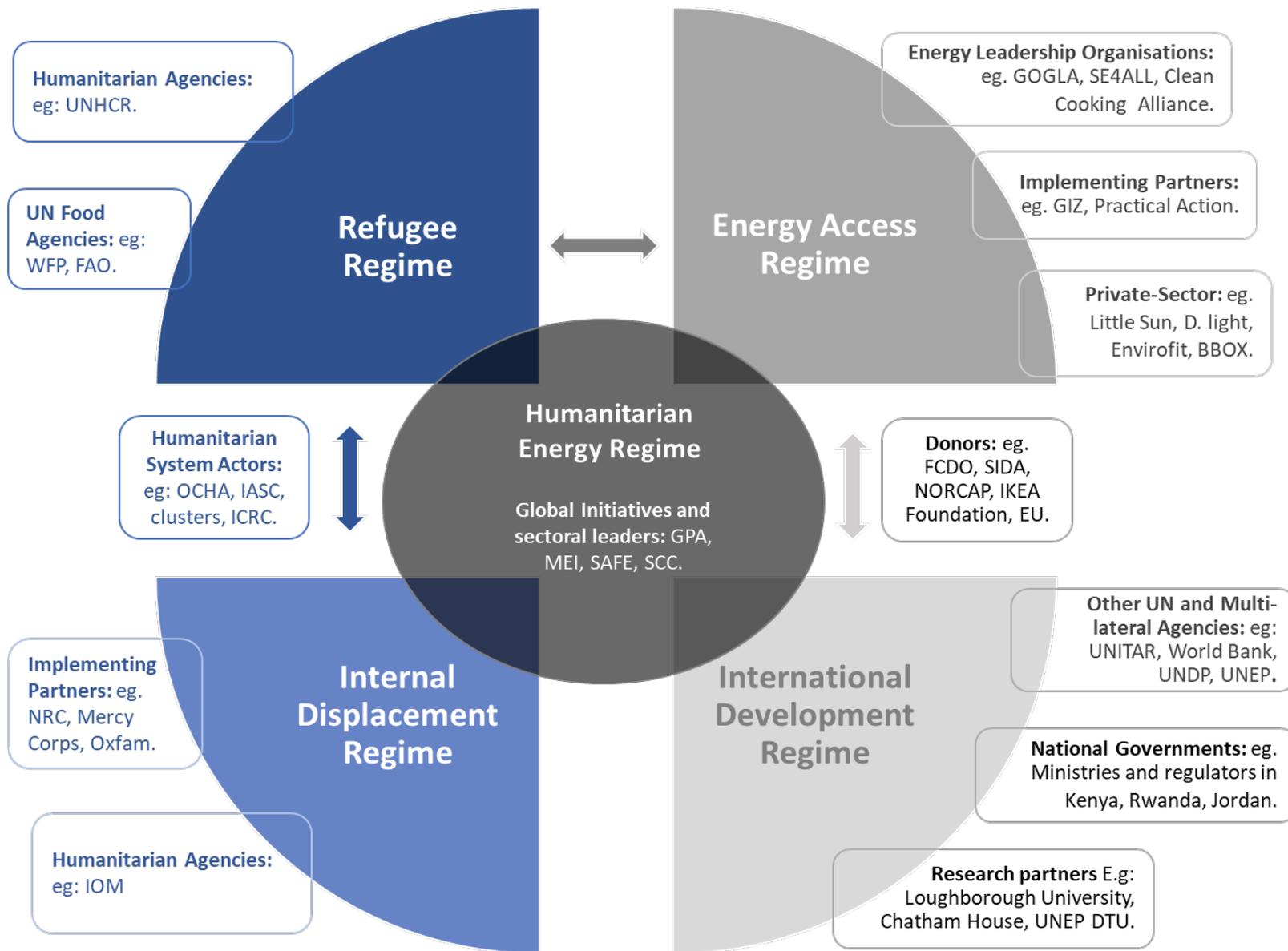
## Energy Sector

**Energy Leadership Organisations:**  
e.g. GOGLA, SE4ALL, Clean Cooking Alliance.

**Implementing Partners:** e.g. GIZ, Practical Action.

**Private-Sector:** e.g. Little Sun, D. light, Envirofit, BBOXX.

# Regime Complexity



# Landscape of Humanitarian Energy Action: Changing Picture Across Time

## Independent Action: Pre 2010

- Overall lack of electricity access and some firewood access in camps, urban settings acting independently and not really considered for energy.
- Some agencies have policies and initial cooking pilots.
- Cookstoves focused and SAFE working group agenda emerging.

Before 2010

Agencies:  
UNHCR, IOM,  
WFP, FAO, etc

Donors:  
IKEA  
Foundation,  
DFID

Implementing Partners

Firewood distributed in camps, occasional solar lantern distribution, diesel generation for operations, some street lighting. Non-camp settings not really considered

## Climate mitigation & Renewable energy discussion

International discussions around the urgency to deal with climate change and its challenges, discussions on the use of fossil fuels or diesel generators to using and how energy fits into humanitarian settings. Donors start to assemble climate policy teams looking at problem from climate mitigation angle, and sustainability in a micro and bottom up way.

## Initial collaboration: 2010 to 2015

- Limited energy capacity in agencies starts to be recognised. More pilots, still cookstoves focused.
- Some progress, but very limited technical learning or options for scale.
- IF Investment in UNHCR – over 80 million euros but most in solar lantern distribution.
- Some new energy assessments and tools and data emerge, but limited application and usually fuels focused.
- MEI starts initial phases and heat, light and power launched.

2010 to 2015

Agencies:  
UNHCR, IOM,  
WFP, FAO, etc

Initiatives: MEI, SAFE

Implementing Partners

Private sector partners: EDP, Little Sun

Firewood distributed in camps, some solar home system and lantern sales, diesel generation for operations, more solar street lighting. Non-camp settings start to be considered

## Formation of MEI moving energy Initiative

Concept paper with Chatham House: Heat, Light and Power: what is energy for displacement. Definitions around energy for displaced people. Commissioned research with CH, UNHCR and NRC

## Global leadership by the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves and Donors

Clean Cooking Alliance Leading this topic on cooking within SAFE. However, Interagency standing committee turned down energy as a separate cluster.

# Landscape of Humanitarian Energy Action: Current Developments

## Developing Partnerships: 2015 to 2018

- More partnerships emerging in the sector. Some agencies hire more dedicated energy staff.
- Projects over pilots, some successes.
- IKEA Foundation and KfW solar mini-grids in Jordan, MEI low-carbon projects, GACC Spark fund and humanitarian fund, LPG pilots.
- More players, more partners, more noise and media attention but not at scale yet.

## Implementation at Scale: 2019 onwards

- Consolidation of the sector.
- Working more through alternative delivery partnerships.
- GPA oversight and coordination, agencies up-skilling and more delegation, knowledge and resource initiatives, joint fundraising.

2015 to 2018

2019 Onwards

Global Plan of Action: UNITAR, UNHCR, IOM, WFP, Mercy corps, FAO, SE4All, Chatham House, etc

Donors: Germany, IF, DFID, NORCAP

Agencies:  
UNHCR, IOM,  
WFP, FAO, etc

Initiatives: MEI, SAFE,  
UN Electric, IRENA, SCC

Implementing  
Partners

Delivery  
partnerships, eg:  
PA in Rwanda

Private sector:  
EDP,  
Eurelectric,  
Inyenyeri, etc

Firewood distributed in most camps, CASH and cooking markets start to emerge in some places, more solar home system and lantern sales, still diesel generation for operations, more solar street lighting. Non-camp settings considered

Global Platform for Action:  
All sector participants involved

GPA  
coordination  
+ facilitation  
role

Implementing  
Partners and  
Delivery  
Partnerships

Agencies  
supported

Technical  
assistance and  
implementation  
by expert  
partners

Initiatives +  
knowledge  
providers

Private sector  
collaborations

## Informal Cluster Formation

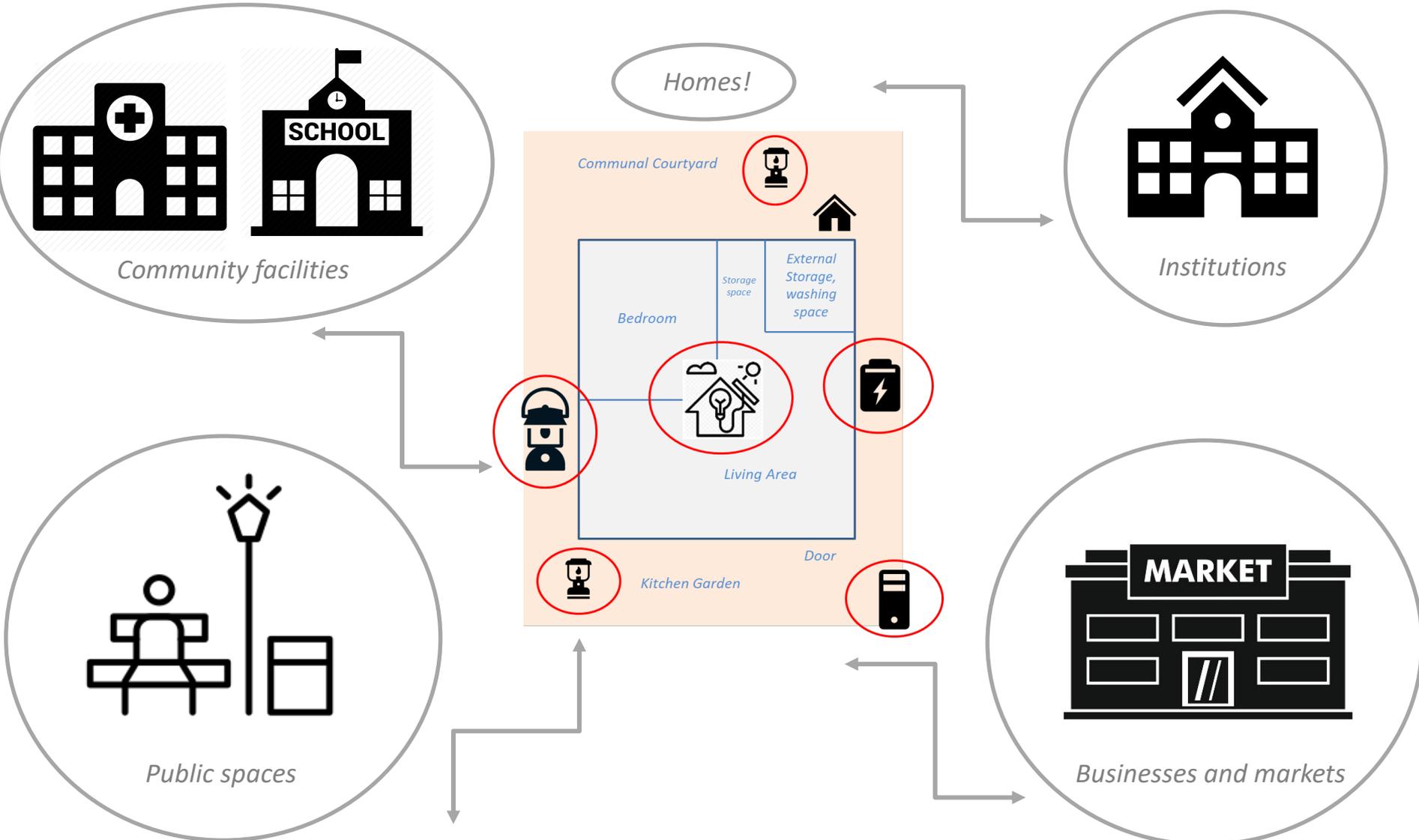
Informal cluster – organising this via working level conference, Berlin 2018. July 2018 – GPA multi-stakeholder UN-led process launched in New York at the HPLF. Formal commitments to the issue of humanitarian energy.

## Global Challenges: Global Issue Action

GPA coordinates sectoral activity. Many forms of partnership and collaboration. COVID-19 response and importance of energy for healthcare. Some progressive action for households and communities

# Reality of Lived Experience of Energy: Energy Everywhere

Energy present all over refugee camps and at different levels. However, who responsible for provision of energy services?



# Evolving Governance: Contentions and Confusions

## Who?

- ❖ UNHCR: refugees. IOM: Migrants and IDPs.
- ❖ Humanitarian agencies. Implementing partners and NGOs.
- ❖ Refugees and independent action. Humanitarian provision of aid.

## How?

- ❖ Development versus humanitarian action.
- ❖ Short-term supply of emergency products versus long-term supply of services.
- ❖ How much energy? Tiers and country differences (Jordan compared to Kenya).
- ❖ What type of access and technologies? Electricity, cooking, household, enterprises, community facilities, institutions?
- ❖ Regulation of provision. Repair and replacement.
- ❖ Choices about quality of life: political provision?



# Policy Proliferation: Issue Additions

Recognition of the new normal and protracted nature crisis

Self-reliance narratives and reduction of aid plans. Sustainable livelihoods and less free distribution

Move to settlements rather than encampment policy. Change in host government policies: Uganda example

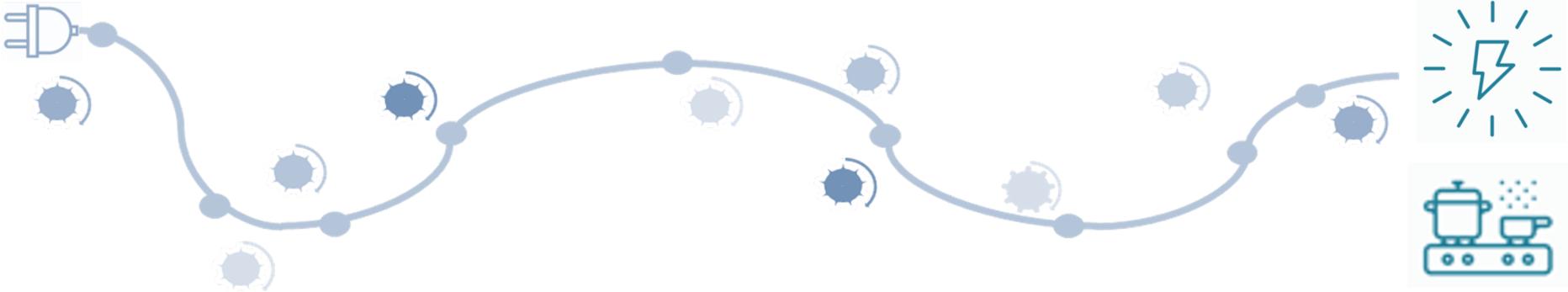
Innovation, new technology advancements, climate change and emissions reduction objectives

Long-term life in camps or settlements requires energy access

Self-reliance requires securing own access to energy and sustainable livelihoods

Settlements like villages and towns can be integrated within national energy plans and sometimes grid connected

Renewable electricity and modern energy cooking services offer new technological, innovative approaches and also reduce CO2.



Right to work and move freely. Refugee and migration compacts  
Access to cash and income resources

Access to sustainable, lower cost energy frees up resources for other costs. Free movement of cash and resources supports development of energy economies of camps

Delivering through alternative delivery models, using market-based mechanisms and private-sector partnerships

Market-based solutions for energy access offer alternative solutions for humanitarian providers

Bottom-up inclusion of displaced people: sustainable humanitarian services and participatory methods working directly with affected communities

Many refugees already use and secure energy themselves, so vital to align with existing individual solutions and livelihoods

# Policy Proliferation: Global and National Policies

## Global policies

- ❖ Competing frameworks and perspectives

## National policies

- ❖ Two types of policies and intersections:



## PARIS CLIMATE AGREEMENT



### Energy policies

- Dependent on challenges associated with energy security and energy independence, and environmental concerns.
- Driven by governments, politics and economic challenges and energy demand in the country.

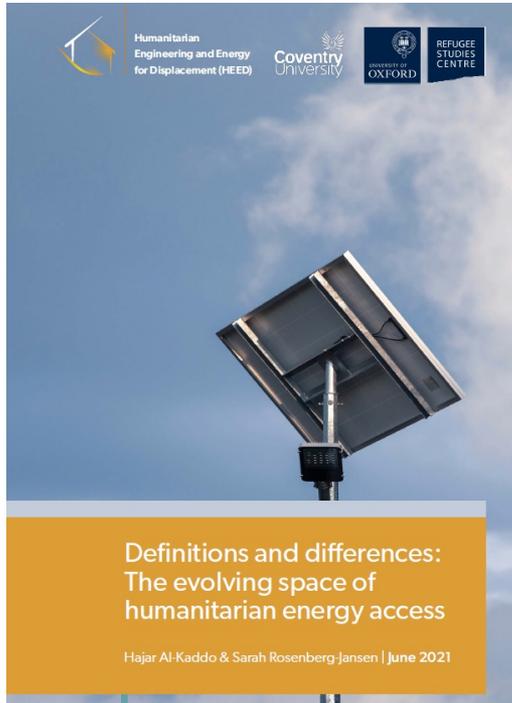
### Refugee policies

- In accordance with international refugee frameworks, such as (CRRF) and non binding international agreements.
- Dependent on the country context and refugee hosting country resources.
- Includes multiple actors (sectors and agencies)
- No energy specific coordination.

## Complexity or intersections of policies

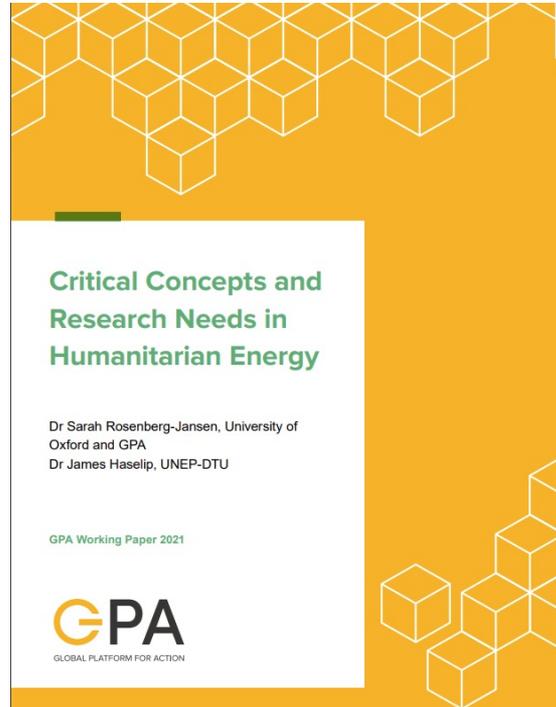
- ❖ *Very little intersection* between policies and sectors.
- ❖ *Many contending perspectives* - Refugee and energy ministries usually work independently across different institutions, international and national agencies with different agendas and sectors.
- ❖ *Institutional priorities* are usually reliant on resources and funding from humanitarian donors towards specific sectors – rather than towards a energy development with a long term view.
- ❖ *Institutional set up* – mainly based on the humanitarian system.

# Publications for Further Information



Al-Kaddo, H. and Rosenberg-Jansen, S. (2021) Definitions and Differences: The Evolving Space of Energy Access in Humanitarian Energy. HEED Briefing Paper. [Online](#).

❖ Definitions



Rosenberg-Jansen, S. and Haselip, J. (2021) Critical Concepts and Research Needs in Humanitarian Energy. GPA Working Paper. [Online](#).

❖ Research overview



Rosenberg-Jansen, S., Tunge, T. & Kayumba, T. Inclusive energy solutions in refugee camps. *Nat Energy* 4, 990–992 (2019). [Online](#).

❖ Inclusivity practices

# Discussion and Questions



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## Panellists



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GIZ and ENDEV



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Lama Gharaibeh  
NRC and NORCAP



Dr Phillip Sandwell  
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Dr James Haselip  
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## Discussion

