

Twenty-fifth meeting of the Council
Abu Dhabi, 23-24 May 2023

Preliminary Framework for the Work Programme and Budget for 2024-2025

I. Introduction

The present document sets out the preliminary programmatic framework for 2024-2025, pursuant to the IRENA Assembly Decision on the IRENA Programmatic and Budgetary Cycle of 14 January 2013 (A/3/DC/12)¹. This Decision sets out the process for adoption of the biennial work programme and budget, which entails the submission of a Preliminary Framework to the first meeting of the Council taking place during the last year of the current Budgetary Cycle to obtain guidance for the development of the draft Work Programme and Budget for the last meeting of the Council taking place during the last year of the current Budgetary Cycle and ensuing Assembly session.

The Decision also requests the Director-General to “consult with Members to elicit their views on the IRENA work programming to be taken into consideration in developing the biennium work programme and budget, within the overall Medium-term Strategic framework”. Accordingly, the Director-General invited Members to provide input to the upcoming Work Programme on 10 March 2023. In response, 16 Members provided detailed and welcome contributions that supported the development of the Preliminary Framework. Feedback was also received from Members in the course of the development of the Medium-term Strategy and at the thirteenth session of the Assembly in January 2023. In line with the previous practice, the Secretariat sought input from IRENA’s Coalition for Action members so that inputs from the private sector and civil society institutions can also be considered when elaborating the Work Programme².

The Preliminary Framework is rooted in the new Medium-term Strategy (MTS)³, which was adopted in January 2023 and remains in force until 2027. Following the twenty-fifth meeting of the Council, this Preliminary Framework will be elaborated into a draft Work Programme and Budget for 2024-2025 for consideration by the Council at its twenty-sixth meeting.

II. Strategic Direction

The Medium-Term Strategy 2023-2027 sets out a vision for IRENA's future and highlights the changing global context in which the Agency operates. This changing context and the expectations that Members have from the Agency are set out in the revised mission statement. Accordingly, IRENA is expected to “*take the leading role in accelerating the global, renewables-based energy transition to fight climate change, enhance human welfare and drive an urgent and systemic shift for increased energy access, reduced inequalities, improved energy security, and prosperous and resilient economies and societies*”.

¹ Available [here](#).

² Written contribution can be found at this [link](#).

³ Available [here](#).

This mission is reflected in five strategic objectives that provide orientation to programmatic cycles, guiding the Agency's action across its areas of competence. These objectives call on IRENA to:

- Provide thought leadership and authoritative knowledge, data and analyses on all aspects of the energy transition and its impacts at global, regional, national and sectoral levels;
- Galvanise international collaboration and provide an inclusive platform for all stakeholders to foster targeted action, alignment of activities and knowledge sharing for impact on the ground;
- Pursue excellence in renewables innovation, development and deployment and promote practical application of knowledge for systemic change;
- Assist regional and country-level decision-making and support implementation strategies to reduce global emissions, adapt to climate change, and improve energy access, security and affordability for sustainable development; and
- Facilitate the development of project pipelines and channel investment toward renewables-based energy systems in developing countries.

Member feedback received on the priorities for the coming programmatic period reaffirmed the strategic considerations and guidance of the MTS outlined above, with nuances stemming from national and regional contexts and priorities. These span from sustainable development imperatives, energy security, resilience at all levels and local pollution considerations, with the overarching backdrop of the accelerating climate change and its wide-ranging consequences. Also considered are the significant global events of the past biennium, notably the wide-ranging effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Ukrainian crisis that have further crystallised the vulnerabilities of the current energy system. They also accentuated the areas that need to be proactively shaped to ensure the long-term resilience and sustainability of the energy system dominated by renewables.

The latest IPCC report⁴ made abundantly clear that the use of energy, particularly the burning of fossil fuels, is a major source of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. It also stressed the energy sector's significant potential to reduce GHG emissions by transitioning to renewable energy sources and improving energy efficiency. The report finds that climate change is already affecting many regions and sectors. It is causing more frequent and severe heatwaves, heavy precipitation events and droughts, and is exacerbating coastal flooding and erosion, with significant impacts on communities worldwide. IPCC concludes that climate change is aggravating poverty and inequality, particularly in developing countries, by affecting food security, water availability, and health.

The progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has been mixed and achieving SDG7 by 2030 remains a challenge. IRENA's latest data shows that the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix has continued to grow, and as of the end of 2022, renewables accounted for 40% of the global installed power capacity. The installed capacity of renewable power has increased by 295 gigawatts (GW) (i.e., an increase by 9.6%) and has accounted for a record-breaking 83% of global power additions. Solar photovoltaic (PV) and wind capacity have been the main drivers of this growth, accounting for 91% of new renewable capacity additions in 2022⁵. Nonetheless, achieving universal access to affordable, reliable, and modern energy by 2030 will require more concerted efforts and investments, particularly in expanding renewable energy deployment and improving energy efficiency. The 2022 Tracking SDG7 report, developed by IRENA jointly with the International Energy Agency (IEA), the UN Statistics Division

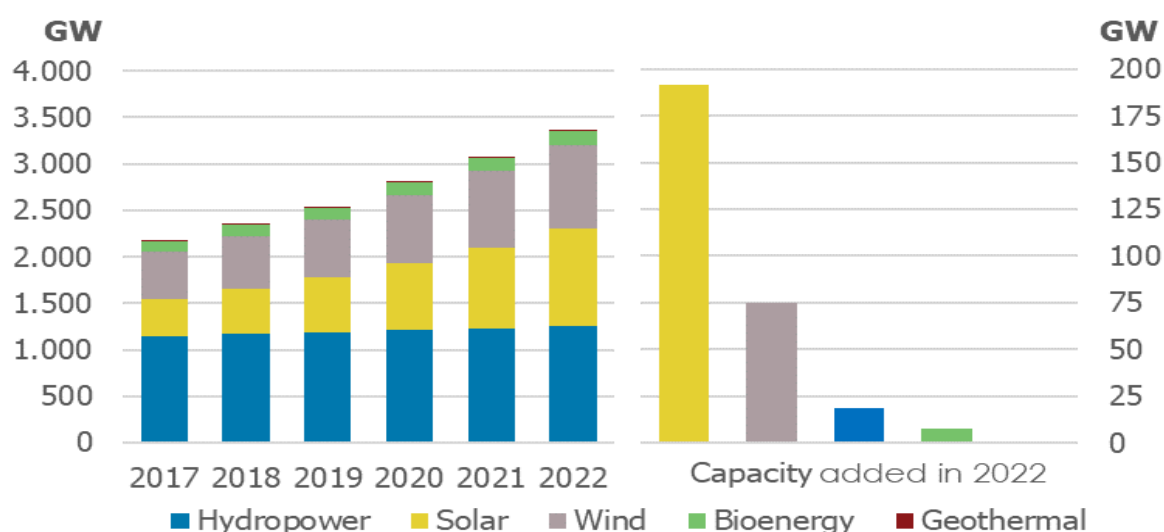
⁴ IPCC (2023), *AR6 Synthesis Report: Climate Change 2023*, Available [here](#).

⁵ IRENA (2023), *Renewable capacity statistics 2023*, Available [here](#).

(UNSD), the World Bank (WB) and the World Health Organization (WHO), shows that, as of 2020, about 733 million people globally still lacked access to electricity, and 2.4 billion people relied on traditional biomass for cooking and heating. The share of renewables is also woefully short of what is required to stay on a climate-safe path.

This reality requires practical and urgent action to increase the resilience of energy systems that underpin economies and societies. Moreover, heightened concerns around energy security have prompted several countries and regions to revise their energy transition strategies to deal with the immediate concerns, with several turning to renewables as the strategic solution in the mid to long term. This is reflected in real-life developments. In 2022, global investments in energy transition technologies⁶ reached USD 1.3 trillion⁷. This marks a new record, up 19% from 2021 investment levels and 70% from before the pandemic in 2019, despite prevailing macroeconomic, geopolitical and supply chain challenges. Global investment in renewable energy also reached a record high of USD 0.5 trillion in 2022⁸, when almost 300 GW of new renewable power was added to the global mix (Figure 1).⁹

Figure 1: Renewable power capacity growth, 2017-2022



Source: IRENA, *Renewable capacity statistics 2023*, (2023).

However, these global numbers and positive news mask important nuances. Investments are increasingly concentrated in a few regions and countries. Approximately 120 developing and emerging markets continue to receive comparatively low investment. Across these, the bulk of renewable energy investments is concentrated in only three countries: Brazil, China, and India. This means that more than 50% of the world's population – mostly residing in developing and emerging countries – received only 15% of global investments in renewables in 2022¹⁰. Moreover, fossil fuel investments are also on the rise and the fossil fuel industry continues to benefit from subsidies,

⁶ Includes renewable energy, energy efficiency, electrified transport and heat, energy storage, clean hydrogen and carbon capture and storage (CCS).

⁷ IRENA and CPI, *Global landscape of renewable energy finance 2023*, (2023).

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ IRENA (2023), *op. cit.*

¹⁰ IRENA and CPI, *op. cit.*

which doubled in 2021 across 51 countries¹¹.

IRENA's 1.5°C pathway set out in the World Energy Transitions Outlook (WETO) positions electrification and energy efficiency as main transition drivers, enabled by renewables, clean hydrogen and sustainable biomass. The preview of the 2023 WETO¹² shows that the world is far from the required scale and size of change to stay on the 1.5°C pathway, lagging at all levels and in all sectors. Most progress has been made in the power sector, indicating that a combination of technologies, policies and innovation allowed for significant but incremental progress. But the deployment of renewable power capacity has to triple to reach 1000 GW annually to meet the climate and development objectives and milestones set out in the international agreements¹³. The WETO preview also stressed that the focus needs to shift from the supply to the demand side and systematically address structural barriers that prevent speedy transition. It outlines three priority pillars- *physical infrastructure, legal and regulatory enablers and a well-skilled workforce* – which need to be addressed simultaneously and require not only significant investment but also a redesign of international cooperation so that all actors can play their optimal roles.

It is with this backdrop that IRENA is shaping its next work programme; developed to embrace the new strategic direction and lead a systemic shift to renewables as the means to tackling not only energy concerns but also a positive contribution to human welfare and equality. With the added attention to the interaction between renewables and energy security and resilience, the work programme will balance the need to be responsive to immediate priorities and short-term challenges with long-term strategies so that the Agency can both reflect and influence the tumultuous times in which we operate.

III. Priorities for the 2024-2025 Programmatic Cycle

The global prioritisation of energy transitions is a welcome development. In contrast to IRENA being a near-lone voice of renewables only a few years ago, there are now many players in the energy transition landscape. It is increasingly essential that the Agency focuses on its comparative advantages to best serve its Membership, promote efficient use of resources, and avoid duplication of work. IRENA's forward-looking, global mandate and clear purpose of driving the renewables-based energy transition worldwide continue to give the Agency a competitive edge that will be harnessed in the implementation of its programmatic activities. In this regard, Member participation will continue to be mainstreamed in the programmatic work through Collaborative Frameworks and other innovative approaches, as IRENA's main strategic asset.

In recent years, IRENA has pursued partnerships across public, private, and civil society entities, especially those that contribute to the quality of analytical output and provide the link to the implementation of necessary actions. This approach has also influenced IRENA's way of working, and collaborative projects, both analytical and country-level, has become an Agency trademark. Examples range from analytical reports, such as on jobs with ILO, African market analysis with AfDB, or on solar PV markets with WTO and through initiatives like the global Health and Energy Platform of Action (HEPA) with WHO. This also includes the Energy Transition Accelerator Financing (ETAF) Platform, which has brought several financing and related institutions under the IRENA umbrella. These collaborative approaches have proven to be effective and have contributed to IRENA's reach and influence. Such strategic alliances will continue to be pursued

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Available [here](#).

¹³ [Paris Agreement](#) and [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#).

going forward.

In their feedback on the next Work Programme, Members provided a range of concrete suggestions and themes, with several underlying commonalities. First, there was a clear request to pay attention to short-term developments and priorities, considering the dynamism and unpredictability of the sector and the deadline of 2030 as a major milestone for the realisation of development and climate goals. Second, there was a strong call for balance across pillars, guided by analytical excellence and the necessary granularity to empower sound decision-making and concerted action. Finally, Members emphasised the new elements in the IRENA mission, notably energy security, access, increased equality and human welfare, and stressed the importance of making clear and practical links with the renewables-based transition. Members also noted the importance of the results-based approach to measure the impact and track the implementation of IRENA's work, which will also help focus on select activities that make the greatest contribution to the global energy transitions effort.

IRENA's Work Programme will continue to span the analytical, empirical, and country support, underpinned by partnerships and collaborative arrangements. Carefully selected and streamlined programmatic activities will aim to fill knowledge gaps, inform, and shape the global energy discourse and drive policy action and investment at scale toward renewables-based energy systems worldwide. As underlined by Members, IRENA can make unique contributions at the regional levels, which will remain central to the work across strategic pillars. Considering the current trajectory of the energy transitions and the broader geo-economic and social context, the immediate programmatic priorities for the biennium will include:

- Physical infrastructure;
- Energy transition investment;
- Well-skilled workforce;
- Access and livelihoods; and
- Energy security and resilience.

Physical Infrastructure. In the WETO preview, IRENA emphasised physical infrastructure as a key pillar of the transition, and an essential prerequisite for greater penetration of renewables. Physical infrastructure upgrades, modernisation and expansion will increase resilience and build flexibility for a diversified and interconnected energy system. Transmission and distribution will need to accommodate both the highly localised, decentralised nature of many renewable fuels, as well as different trade routes. Planning for interconnectors to enable electricity trade and shipping routes for hydrogen and derivatives, must consider vastly different global dynamics and proactively promote the diversification and resilience of energy systems. Storage solutions, EV charging systems and district heating and cooling networks will need to be widespread and designed with geo-economic impacts in mind. Public acceptance is also critical for any large-scale undertaking as opportunities for communities to voice their perspectives and be included in decision making as well as being able to benefit from the projects will be critical. As the future energy system continues to get built, important questions will have to be considered internationally, regionally, and locally on where infrastructure projects are built, who will be impacted, who benefits, who pays and who will own these assets. IRENA has an important role to play in identifying best practice policies and measures to address any potential negative environmental and social impacts of the transition.

Targeted investment toward resilient energy systems. While many industrialised countries are making major strides in transitioning toward renewable systems, significant barriers to investment at scale in developing countries continues to hamper progress. Overcoming these will be the single most crucial factor in their ability to transform their energy systems at the necessary pace and rapidly reduce energy poverty that hinders sustainable development and improved livelihoods. IRENA will therefore continue to support its Members overcome challenges to investment in the energy transition in general, and renewable energy projects in particular, through analytical work and project facilitation. On the analytical side, IRENA will continue to study global investment trends, funding needs and barriers impeding investment, to derive recommendations on innovative financing instruments and broader systemic reforms needed for a just and inclusive energy transition. Moreover, IRENA will continue to expand partnerships with financing entities and facilitate a pipeline of bankable projects rooted in a stable policy and regulatory framework and supported by de-risking mechanisms. The Climate Investment Platform (CIP) and the Energy Transition Accelerator Financing (ETAF) Platform are starting to yield results and IRENA will seek to grow these activities, with additional efforts on capacity building training programmes for project developers, financial institutions and state actors, and technical advisory support to project proponents. All of these activities will also be linked with the analytical work to increase and accelerate learning globally.

Well-skilled workforce. IRENA has long focused on jobs, measuring its growth as a major socioeconomic benefit but also foreseeing the lack of skilled personnel as a possible barrier to the energy transition. As this is now emerging as a widespread concern, IRENA has yet again positioned it in the WETO preview as an essential pillar of the accelerated transition.¹⁴ The renewable energy sector employed some 12.7 million people worldwide as of 2022, growing from about 7.3 million in 2012.¹⁵ WETO indicates that tens of millions of additional jobs will likely be created in the coming decades as investments grow and installed capacities expand. A broad range of occupational profiles will be needed and filling these jobs will require concerted action in education and skills development. To attract talent to the sector, it is crucial that jobs are decent, and that women, youth and minorities have equal access to job training, hiring networks and career opportunities. IRENA will therefore build on its pioneering work on jobs, education, and gender to sustain focus on this often-forgotten aspect of the energy transition.

Access and livelihoods. Over the years, IRENA has gradually increased its focus on access, given the importance of renewables for the achievement of SDG7 and the resulting impact on lives and livelihoods. With energy access expansion slowing down and even reverting in many countries across the IRENA Membership, IRENA will make a greater contribution to ensure that the role of renewables in access is recognised and that their deployment in access settings is accelerated. Given that access to energy is a requirement for the achievement of many other SDGs, IRENA will continue to take a systemic and cross-sectoral approach across a range of social and economic priorities to position renewables as a means to improved health, access to water, and efficient agri-food chains, among other goals. The work will include state-of-the-art data and analysis, as well as collaborative partnerships and alliances that can accelerate progress on the ground.

Energy security and resilience. Policy makers have a unique chance to reassess the options available to them and consider how investment in the renewables-based transitions can contribute to diverse objectives, notably long-term energy security, resilience, and new forms of collaboration. With the MTS positioning renewables as a key avenue toward these goals, IRENA will spearhead a fresh approach to the strategic deployment of energy transition technologies and proactive

¹⁴ IRENA, [World Energy Transitions Outlook 2023: 1.5C Pathway' Preview](#), 2023.

¹⁵ IRENA, [Renewable energy and Jobs: Annual review 2022](#), 2022.

management of possible obstacles and adverse impacts. Highly topical subjects such as critical materials and green hydrogen will remain part of this work, along with emerging technical and geo-economic considerations. Programmatic activities will also focus on clarifying the impact of different pathways, to help countries make forward-looking, safe, and strategic choices.

IV. Work Programme Framework for 2024-2025

The Framework seeks to rebalance programmatic focus to respond to current and new priorities, while ensuring a sound knowledge and analytical base and the necessary agility to respond to change.

An essential underpinning of these substantive priorities will be a continuous focus on institutional excellence. Several tools have been introduced to promote cross-Divisional cooperation and consolidation of activities to leverage internal expertise and focus on fewer, but more impactful outputs. Strong internal linkages, along with close consideration of external partnerships, is guiding the elaboration of the Work Programme and Budget for 2024 - 2025.

a. Centre of Excellence for Energy Transformation

Objective: Provide thought leadership and authoritative knowledge, data and analyses on all aspects of the energy transition and its impacts at global, regional, national and sectoral levels.

IRENA will continue to function as a Centre of Excellence for Energy Transformation, refining and improving its flagship analytical and empirical products to provide comprehensive and timely information, evidence, and recommendations to increase global investments to the levels needed and to distribute them more evenly among end uses and countries. Its work will focus on all sectors, including electricity and end-use, as well as analyses of the finance, socio-economic, environmental, and geopolitical aspects of the energy transition, with an added emphasis on systemic change. The next two years will be crucial in achieving the 2030 Agenda and staying on a 1.5-degree pathway, and IRENA will strive to improve the accessibility of its products while ensuring rigour, transparency, and credibility.

IRENA will observe progress in the energy transition through various lenses, including renewable energy statistics, renewable energy potential and resources, costs, policy, targets, jobs reviews, socio-economic impacts, finance landscape, and technology indicators. These will feed into the central annual product, WETO, which will evolve in line with the priorities of the MTS and global energy dynamics. WETO will monitor the progress of the energy transition, with the necessary granularity and nuance for evidence-based policymaking and informing international processes such as the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). Additionally, the analysis will advance the work on human welfare, providing a deeper understanding of the structural changes and progress in the sustainable development agenda. This will be particularly relevant to the ongoing policy evolution of sustainable industrialisation and distributional aspects. To support the alignment of regional strategies and investments with mid- and long-term development and climate goals, several Regional Energy Transition Outlooks, including in Africa and Latin America, will be finalised.

IRENA will provide thought leadership on the links and impacts of renewables on energy security, including topical priorities such as global supply chains, critical materials, and hydrogen. Flagship analyses will be conducted in critical areas of innovation, just and inclusive energy transitions, and geopolitics, and expand the breadth and depth of the access-related topics. This will include tracking SDG7 on energy, in cooperation with custodian institutions as it has been the practice since 2016 but also further work on clean cooking and off-grid renewables for energy access. In addition, input from Members and others who participate in energy transitions will be critical to the work under this pillar. The Agency will also consolidate its analytical work, drawing upon all aspects of its activities to produce fewer, but more comprehensive products. Analytical work will underpin the convening, technical assistance, and capacity building efforts, and also benefit from them, leading to sharper policy advice and real-life applicability.

b. International Collaboration and Network Hub

Objective: Galvanise international collaboration and provide an inclusive platform for all stakeholders to foster targeted action, alignment of activities and knowledge sharing for impact on the ground.

The centrality of energy to the global development and climate agenda is undisputed, and international cooperation in energy has increased exponentially in recent years. This cooperation plays a decisive role in determining the outcomes of the energy transition and is a critical avenue for achieving greater resilience, inclusion and equality. IRENA stressed in the latest WETO that the dynamism of energy sectors and geopolitical developments necessitate greater scrutiny of international cooperation modalities, instruments and approaches to ensure their relevance, impact and agility. It also called for greater scrutiny of the roles and responsibilities of different players to ensure their optimal contribution and alignment with the energy transition needs. This includes an assessment of IRENA's own role and how it can best leverage its global Membership, broad reach, and access to the vast expertise contained by its Members.

Building on the experience to date, IRENA will seek to make the best use of its proven collaborative initiatives, maximise the use of its regular meetings and purposefully engage in selected regional and global events. The Agency will leverage its Governing Body meetings as the prime global venue for international cooperation on energy transitions. Other cooperation avenues, notably collaborative frameworks, will be refined and streamlined as tools for engagement, peer-to-peer exchange, and enrichment of programmatic output through the participation of a wide range of stakeholders. In this regard, the Coalition for Action will continue to serve as a strategic arm for stakeholder participation in IRENA. Similarly, ongoing work with constituencies such as youth and parliamentarians will continue given the importance of these voices.

IRENA's established initiatives will continue to evolve. Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Lighthouses Initiative (LHI) will reach 10 years of its existence in 2024, when the Fourth International Conference on SIDS will take place. This will be a critical moment for the Initiative to feed into the process and adjust to the outcome of the Conference in line with the emerging priorities set out by SIDS. The other long-standing initiatives including Global Geothermal Alliance, Long-Term Energy Scenarios Network, and Entrepreneurship Support Facility will be carefully assessed to ensure they are responsive to the new and emerging priorities. Special efforts will be placed to advance more recent initiatives including the Alliance for Industry Decarbonisation and the Global Offshore Wind Alliance¹⁶. In line with the refined strategic priorities, IRENA will pursue international cooperation on access to facilitate the integration of

¹⁶ GOWA is co-founded by Denmark, IRENA and GWEC.

decentralized renewable solutions in agri-food and health sectors, along with the delivery of biennial IOREC as a flagship IRENA off-grid conference. Additional activities will include the establishment of the Energy Transition Education Network to facilitate multi-stakeholder cooperation on education and skills.

IRENA is already an active participant in collaborative efforts such as UN-Energy, COP, and the UNFCCC Marrakesh Partnership for the Global Climate Action, as well as Member-led initiatives such as Mission Innovation and Breakthrough Agenda¹⁷ among others. IRENA has also been a regular contributor to processes such as G7 and G20, and such cooperation will continue upon request by Members. In addition, IRENA will continue to participate in pertinent regional and political fora and retain the necessary agility to be able to respond to such requests, including the support of post-COP28 activities.

c. Global Voice of Renewables

Objective: Pursue excellence in renewables innovation, development and deployment and promote practical application of knowledge for systemic change.

IRENA has a significant comparative advantage in the renewable sector and retaining its excellence and a leadership role will be of the essence as the pace of transition accelerates. The coming years will require granular work on renewables-related elements across infrastructure, policy and human resources as key enablers. IRENA will therefore stay abreast of key developments and innovations, including enabling aspects such as policy frameworks, grids, storage, flexibility solutions, power-to-X, electrification and direct application in end-uses, supply chains, green hydrogen, and alike. Greater focus will be placed on electricity access and clean cooking, in line with the new strategic priorities. This work will spread across technology, policy, markets and finance to offer advanced insights and practical support for systemic change.

A focus will continue to be placed on the integration of variable renewables in the power system, given the ambition and necessity for the deployment of solar and wind technologies. Analyses of renewables in end-use sectors, including transport, heating and cooling as well as market design remain of high relevance. In this regard, electrification of end-use will be considered from many angles, given its importance in the global decarbonisation effort and the potential for leapfrogging solutions in countries yet to evolve the necessary infrastructure and industries. Building on the work to date and based on Member feedback, specific topics will also include environmental impacts and life-cycle assessments, circular economy, quality infrastructure, critical minerals, storage, digitalization, and AI among others. IRENA's pioneering work on gender in energy will be strengthened, along with deeper analyses of renewable solutions for rural communities.

IRENA will step-up proactive communication and outreach as an underpinning of its role as the Global Voice of Renewables. The focus will be placed on strategic leadership to define and disseminate key messages and knowledge products. IRENA will cooperate with communications and social media actors who can help to amplify reach and better target audiences for a more significant impact. In this regard, multilingualism will continue to be used as a tool to disseminate knowledge and enable greater participation in programmatic activities.

¹⁷ Supporting work done in cooperation with the IEA and UNFCCC Climate Champions.

d. Support for Regions and Countries

Objective: Assist regional and country-level decision-making and support implementation strategies to reduce global emissions, adapt to climate change, and improve energy access, security and affordability for sustainable development

Countries approach energy transition with different starting points and various structural, economic, social and institutional considerations. They therefore require concrete, objective and targeted advice and support and IRENA has filled an important gap in this regard. With the rising institutional focus on access, resilience, and human well-being, and the 2030 timeline fast approaching, support to African countries, Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and SIDS, will continue to be a priority. IRENA's work will include direct support but also a greater effort to partner with implementing and financing entities to ensure complementarity, continuation, and impact on the ground.

Building on the work to date and continuous analytical excellence, IRENA will provide advice and support to countries leveraging its value added. These will be in direct response to requests received from Members and aligned with the priorities of renewables-based energy pathways. The implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and their continuous improvement of both mitigation and adaptation aspects will remain a priority, especially in view of the upcoming 2025 update cycle. Renewable Readiness Assessments (RRAs) and roadmaps remain key offerings, which will be refined to make them more comprehensive, policy-relevant and supportive of national development and investment strategies. Experience to date has shown that IRENA's assistance is also commonly sought on issues such as data collection, renewable energy target design, energy planning, grid integration, renewable resource assessments, policy advice, job creation and nexus with health, food, and water among others. IRENA's established tools and methodologies will therefore continue to be deployed and refined, with the targeted effort for their long-term use by local stakeholders.

Regional approaches are a crucial element for bringing about the necessary flexibilities, efficiencies, and economies of scale for renewables-based transitions. Regional levels will therefore be prioritised to support integrated markets for accelerated energy transitions and a high share of renewables. IRENA is already engaged in multiple regional efforts, including with the ASEAN, AU, EU, and OLADE. In the coming biennium, regional work will increasingly reflect the findings and recommendations of the Regional Energy Transition Outlooks (RETOs), which will provide coherent technology, policy/regulatory and socio-economic pathways that can support the implementation of regional commitments and development strategies.

One of the key alignments in the upcoming biennium will be the 360-degree approach to work that fully links analytical work and action on the ground, and country and regional work will be the lynchpin of this shift. IRENA's empirical and analytical work will feed into all activities under this pillar, and targeted effort will be made to feed the experiences and learning back into the knowledge work. In this way, IRENA will be able to use all programmatic activities to retain, analyse and disseminate learnings for accelerated action.

e. Facilitating Projects and Mobilising Capital

Objective: Facilitate the development of project pipelines and channel investment toward renewables-based energy systems in developing countries.

IRENA's finance landscape report finds that renewable energy investments are on the rise globally, but they continue to be focused on a number of countries and regions. More than 50% of the world's population, mostly residing in developing and emerging countries, received only 15% of global investments in renewables in 2022. Further, the share of renewable energy investments going to these regions has been progressively declining year on year (e.g., from 27% in 2017 to 15% in 2022). In absolute terms, annual investments have been declining precipitously since 2018 at an average rate of 36%. Countries defined as "least developed" by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) attracted only 0.84% of renewable energy investments on average between 2013 and 2020¹⁸.

In some contexts, especially in developing countries, the lack of project pipelines has often been cited as a main barrier to attracting private capital. IRENA has worked in the past couple of years to improve its offer on project facilitation and investment. The Climate Investment Platform (CIP) has been gradually populated with projects from diverse developing countries, which are being supported and matched with entities that can take it to the next level. Early experiences with Investment Forums have provided valuable lessons that will be applied in the future to evolve them as key IRENA regional activities.

The ETAF Platform will seek to grow in partners and commitments, building on the current USD 1 billion pool of funds. IRENA will focus its efforts in line with its competencies and mandate to enhance the flow of financial resources to developing countries and scale up the pipeline of renewable energy projects. Special focus will be placed on projects that have a systemic impact and areas that need help such as proof of concept and crowding in the private sector. IRENA's experience in these areas will be invaluable for better understanding systemic and context relevant challenges and bottlenecks. Simultaneously, it will close the feedback loop and pass this information to IRENA's analytical work, including on policy, finance, and investment. To support project facilitation, IRENA will also deploy existing tools, such as the Global Atlas and site assessments. Both CIP and ETAF will benefit from continuous technical assistance and capacity building on project finance to support project development and increase the skillset level of project proponents. This in turn will help increase the quality of the project pipeline and open new possibilities for investment including a conducive policy environment.

V. Results-based Framework

The MTS introduced a Theory of Change (ToC) as part of the development of the current Medium-term Strategy 2023-2027 in response to Member requests but also to the growing need to enhance and expand monitoring and evaluation system. This also entails a gradual shift to a Results-based Framework (RBF). This transition will commence with the elaboration of the work programme and budget after the twenty-fifth Council meeting. One key step in the process would be to replace the matrix of implementation listing the outputs and deliverables annexed to Progress and Annual Reports of the Director-General on the Work Programme and Budget Implementation. Instead, IRENA will develop a baseline against which progress can be measured based on the desired

¹⁸ IRENA and CPI, [Global landscape of renewable energy finance 2023](#), (2023).

outcomes set out in the ToC. The deliverables will be mapped, and indicators will be developed to measure progress towards the outcomes. This will also assist in a greater alignment of voluntary resources with the strategic priorities, especially as the duration of several contributions exceed the biennial programmatic cycle. Overall, the integration of ToC and RBF in the preparation of the work programme and budget will provide a structured approach to planning, implementation, and monitoring of all IRENA activities.

VI. Budgetary and Management Considerations

Core budget remains the backbone of the Agency's financial stability, and its development for the next cycle will reflect the views expressed by Members in their feedback. A predictable flow of non-core contributions will be necessary to allow the expansion of programmatic activities and strengthen the quality and depth of the activities implemented with core resources. The next Programme will also benefit from multi-year voluntary contributions already provided to the Agency or which are in the process of development. It is anticipated that the dedicated fund that is currently in development will also become operational, to enable access to a diverse and more predictable resource base.

The next biennium will also mark the beginning of staff tenure implementation. Business continuity plans are being implemented, but this period is bound to be disruptive for the Agency, with 26 staff reaching the tenure limits. Special attention will be placed on succession planning and timely recruitment to ensure programme delivery and seamless transition.