

POWER FOR ALL

30 March 2016

Dr. Jim Yong Kim
President, World Bank Group
1818 H Street, NW
Washington, DC 20433 USA

Dear Dr. Kim,

We are writing to you today regarding a critical leadership decision that you will shortly be making in selecting the replacement for the **Senior Director, Energy and Extractives Global Practice** position.

You and other global leaders have repeatedly underscored that universal access to modern energy services is a global imperative, and you have recognized that energy access is a key tenet of the Bank's mission to "end extreme poverty within a generation and boost shared prosperity".

Most recently, the objectives of the UN Secretary General's Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) initiative were enshrined as Sustainable Development Goal 7, with the Parties to the Paris Accord of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change recognizing the need to heavily invest in clean energy for development.

We are writing to you now because of one simple fact: experts agree that achieving the goal of universal access to energy by 2030, if not earlier, is possible, but not by relying solely on the 20th century method of expanding traditional electricity grids. The only way to quickly achieve universal energy access is to also embrace the decentralized renewable energy technologies and business models that have emerged in recent years. While the quickest technologies that can be deployed, so-called solar home systems, may offer lower levels of power than a grid, it has been shown that the majority of human development benefits from access to energy actually occur at a very low level of consumption per capita compared to use in OECD countries.¹ With the increasing efficiency of lighting and appliances, decentralized, renewable energy delivered by household level and mini-grid solutions are therefore incredibly powerful, cost-effective tools for the world's poorest.

Incorporating these new technologies into power and electrification planning means we need to fundamentally rethink approaches to business and finance in this space. However, the vast majority of Bank money and human resources are spent on grids that will take decades to deploy, which we do not have. This needs to change.

While we know the World Bank and other key development institutions are aware of this, there continues to be a lack of major investment in decentralized energy. It appears that this is not from a lack of enthusiasm over the opportunity, or the presence of internal champions, but rather that these critical institutions, such as the World Bank Group, lack the

¹ Majumdar, A. "Electrify the Bottom of the Pyramid," Harvard Business Review (Jan–Feb 2012): 8.

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mechanisms and incentives to engage meaningfully, and at the pace demanded, in this space.

The key to the evolution of decentralized renewable energy is finance and how fast it flows into markets to address barriers and needs. A large investment gap in decentralized renewable energy solutions was identified as a major roadblock by the World Bank in the SE4All Global Tracking Framework 2015. Despite this, and commitments to do otherwise, according to a forthcoming report by Sierra Club and Oil Change International, World Bank spending on decentralized renewable energy actually decreased over the past two years.

Before real progress on universal energy access can be made, development banks, foundations and other concessional sources of finance must become major players in the decentralized energy space.

Hence, with this letter, **we are calling on the World Bank to ensure that important human resource decisions on the horizon in the climate and energy space are prioritized and made with the explicit objective of bringing a novel, outside the box thinker into key positions.**

For the vacancy resulting from the retirement of Anita Marangoly George, Senior Director, Energy and Extractives Global Practice, we call for the Bank to ensure her successor is someone keen to push the Bank and the broader global development community to bend to the needs of this nascent 21st century energy industry with its disruptive technologies and business models. This position requires an individual who can recognize, and act on, the fact that this will require disrupting the business as usual systems of large development institutions such as the World Bank.

You are afforded a timely opportunity to build on Ms. George's enthusiasm for decentralized renewable energy solutions and enable the World Bank to lead with its national government partners and others to push past the bindings of a 20th century energy system, and lead the 1.1 billion people without electricity, and the billions more who lack access to adequate and reliable energy and clean cooking options, to brighter lives and livelihoods.

Power for All, a consortium of major private sector and NGO players in the decentralized energy space, along with the 24 undersigned entities, stand ready to work with your teams to achieve this.

Best regards,



Kristina Skierka
Campaign Director
Power for All

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This letter will also be shared with World Bank Group Executive Directors