

SEA-SALGA-SACN ENERGY NETWORK MEETING

A Sustainable Grid for All

Newsletter piece

In June 2022, the Urban Energy Network held its first in-person event since the Covid-19 lockdown. Themed “A sustainable grid for all” the session aimed to understand what the climate commitments of metros and other municipalities mean in renewable energy development terms and clarify what mandates and mechanisms municipalities can draw on towards contributing to meeting these targets. The mechanisms explored include embedded generation and IPP procurement (both municipal and private sector led), as well as ‘wheeling’ – or bi-lateral energy trade agreements. Energy access was included in the discussion as an important element of the transition, along with the process of setting electricity and small-scale embedded generation tariffs towards revenue generation, enhancement, and protection in municipalities.



The session also explored developing communications to establish customers as active participants in renewable development. The City of Tshwane shared details of its social media campaign that began early this year – “#TshwaneYatima” which was driven by revenue collection improvement and credit control objectives, to reduce the debtor’s book. The campaign enabled the City to collect R700 million in two weeks, however not without hurdles and challenges. This was an enormous undertaking that was backed by the Council, the Mayor, and the

Municipal Manager, together with an interdepartmental team.

The discussion drew out the importance of communicating **to, or with** customers rather than **at** them. This can influence behavioural change, and it sets the tone for rebuilding trust and accountability between the resident and the municipality. Electricity sector communication tools developed as part of the municipal transition support work of SEA, as well as a City communications toolkit developed by SACN were shared. These include simplified, short infographics and narrated videos that explain technical electricity and energy terms in simple language and drawing on many official languages. The tools are meant to assist municipalities in their endeavours to communicate better with their constituents on the complex issues of electricity tariffs.

Small Scale Embedded Generation (SSEG) including the registration process, incentives for feeding back to the municipal grid, installation process, were mentioned as some of the key actions required to transition into clean energy at local level within the ambit of a **sustainable grid for all** approach. In addition, at the forefront of this, is community involvement, an inclusive multi-stakeholder partnered approach, affordable tariffs, and the creation of job opportunities. Engagements and contributions also included SALGA, GIZ, ESKOM, DMRE City of Johannesburg and various other secondary city municipalities.

Case studies from the City of Tshwane, City of Ekurhuleni, City of Cape Town, George Municipality, GIZ – communications toolkit by SACN and local government energy procurement resources by SEA and SALGA can be accessed from the appended links:

[#Tshwane Ya Tima Presentation](#) | [City of Cape Town Communication Campaigns](#) | [Ekurhuleni IPP Power Procurement Programme](#) | [George RE Policy Framework](#) | [George Reinventing the Wheel Wheeling Case Study](#) | [Municipal Electricity Tariff Communication Plan](#) | [SACN Communications Toolkit](#) | [The future grid dynamic, smart and efficient](#) | [A Sustainable Grid for All](#) | [MUNICIPAL STAKEHOLDER Electricity Tariff Communication Survey Results](#) | [Municipal Electricity Tariff Communication Plan](#) | [Survey](#)