

# FORUM FOR THE FUTURE



Responsible  
Energy  
Initiative  
India

## People-Centred Business Models

2025



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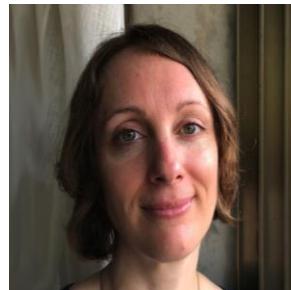
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# WHO WE ARE

Forum for the Future is a leading international sustainability non-profit with offices in London, New York, Singapore and Mumbai.

For nearly 30 years we've been working in partnership with business, governments and civil society to accelerate the shift towards a just and regenerative future in which both people and the planet thrive.

## OUR WORK

# Three transitions already underway

WITH GENUINELY GAME-CHANGING POTENTIAL TO ADDRESS OUR INTENSIFYING ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CRISES



How we think about,  
produce, consume and  
value **food**



How we think about,  
produce, consume and  
value **energy**



The purpose of  
**business** in society  
and the economy



Responsible  
Energy  
Initiative

# Responsible Energy Initiative

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For an ecologically positive  
and socially just renewable  
energy system



# How to get there



## Responsible Energy Initiative (REI)



Multistakeholder collaboration working with RE developers, manufacturers, procurers, financiers, policymakers, and civil society.



Catalyses the adoption of business models and value-chains in the RE sector that are just, equitable, rights-respecting and ecologically resilient.



Designs solutions across the entire renewables value chain with active stakeholder collaboration.



Complements and partners with initiatives to scale renewable adoption and accelerate investment.

# Our focus on community-ownership and people-centred models

## How work came about

- Builds on Forum's long-standing focus on a just and regenerative approach and the intersectionality of social and environmental issues
- Responds to demand for practical tools for responsible business models

## Position within Responsible Energy Initiative

- Anchored in REI's goal of responsible, inclusive energy systems.
- Offers a practical lens and structured way for RE actors to understand and identify different models and enabling conditions

## How we hope this contributes

Serve as a series of practical resources for developers, financiers, CSOs, and others to:

- a) Recognise enabling conditions and principles for establishing utility scale models
- b) Enables comparison across projects - spotting ambition gaps.
- c) Generates shared language for responsible business.
- d) Inspires through engaging case studies

# Community Ownership in Large-Scale Renewable Energy – A Global South Perspective



## Objective

Support civil society with **tools, evidence, and networks** to advocate for and **implement community ownership models** while also **providing clear guidance for policymakers and industry**.

## Key activities

**White Paper:** A comprehensive review of community ownership models in **large-scale** renewable energy projects.

**Industry brief:** Define the enabling conditions for implementing community ownership at scale.

**Anthology:** A collection of success stories that showcase how communities in the Global South have taken ownership in large-scale renewable energy projects.

A wide-angle, aerial photograph of a wind farm situated on a series of rolling hills. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm, golden glow over the landscape and creating long shadows. Numerous wind turbines are scattered across the hills, with a dense concentration on the highest peaks. A winding road or path cuts through the terrain, leading towards the center of the image. The foreground shows some agricultural fields and a mix of green vegetation and rocky areas. The overall scene is one of a rural, sustainable energy source.

# A Taxonomy of Community Ownership Models

# People-centred business models & community ownership



- **People-centred business modes**, a broad categorization of models that place the needs, priorities, and rights of people, particularly workers and communities at the heart of how value is created, delivered, and shared.
- **Community ownership** is a model within this categorisation, where the energy project assets are jointly owned, operated, and controlled by members of a community and the project developers/operators, and enables communities to participate in decision-making

# TAXONOMY

Adapted from existing resources (World Bank; BHRRC & Indigenous People's Rights International; Canada's National Benefit Sharing Framework)

Review of 14 models in Sub-Saharan Africa, South America, South and South-East Asia (ongoing)

Ownership	Indigenous & cultural rights
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Equity shares</b> (indigenous, community, municipal, private developer)</li> <li>• <b>Meaningful level of influence</b> (community control, shared control, minority influence (veto), tokenistic)</li> <li>• <b>Governance rights</b> (board seats, veto rights)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>FPIC status</b> (achieved, document, partial, absent)</li> <li>• <b>Land rights regime</b> (indigenous title, customary land, contested claims, state or private title)</li> <li>• <b>Cultural protections</b> (cultural heritage agreements, co-management of sites, redress mechanisms)</li> </ul>
Benefit sharing	Accountability and justice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Financial benefits</b> (equity dividends, revenue share, royalties)</li> <li>• <b>Non-financial benefits</b> (local employment + procurement minimums; energy access mechanisms, skills development)</li> <li>• <b>Longevity and management</b> (legally binding, when delivered (prior to construction, post-COD)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Grievance mechanisms</b> (independent/community-led)</li> <li>• <b>Monitoring and transparency</b> (regularity of reporting, mechanisms for reporting)</li> <li>• <b>Enforcement mechanisms</b></li> </ul>

# TAXONOMY

Specific project enabling conditions

## **A. Detailed Governance & legal mechanics**

- Legal vehicle details
- Board & committee terms
- Specific veto/consent list
- Exit & transfer mechanics
- Contract catalogue & references
- Dispute resolution

## **B. Full financial & risk profile**

- Capital stack breakdown
- Projected cash flows to community
- Return profile & payment triggers
- Risk allocation matrix
- Capital adequacy / affordability check

## **C. Implementation & timeline details**

- Milestones & triggers
- Allocation timing
- Phasing strategy
- Conditions precedent



# Example: Kipeto Wind Farm

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**Location:** Kaijado County, Kenya

**Developer:** Kipeto Energy PLC

**Community:** Maasai community (61 landowners)

**Ownership:** Landowners (5%) share of company

**Influence:** Tokenistic ownership ("sign of good will"), but extensive consultation pre-development

**Financial benefits:** 1.4% of annual revenue for each wind turbine on land channelled through a community trust; lease rate paid annually

**Grievance mechanism:** Based on Maasai practices, it includes community liaison officers and escalation from household to community elders

**Environmental protection:** co-created biodiversity action plan

**Gaps:**

- Enforcement mechanisms for grievance
- Governance during the project



# Example: Tsitsikamma Community Wind Farm

**Location:** Kaijado County, Kenya

**Developer:** Cennergi

**Community:** AmaMfengu, Tsitsikamma Development Trust

**Ownership:** Cennergi (75%), TDT (9%), Kruger Int. (16%)

**Influence:** Minority (consent rights)

**Financial benefits:** 2.1% quarterly revenue share

**Non-financial benefits:** Tsitsikamma Wind Farm Trust governance over allocation of funding for socio-economic development and economic development programmes

**Gaps:**

- How equity was funded and negotiated
- How equity delivers governance/oversight
- Grievance and transparency mechanisms
- Long-term prosperity



# Example: Terra Initiative

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**Location:** Colombia

**Developer:** Greenwood Energy (Libra Energy)

**Community:** Arhuaco Indigenous People (Confederacion Indigena Tayrona (CIT))

**Ownership:** Greenwood Energy

**Influence:** Shared control: veto rights/final approval for each project site

**Financial benefits:** Environmental fee per KwH,

**Non-financial benefits:** Land transfer, construction of three indigenous townships, training in operation and maintenance of the solar plants - Terra Initiative Framework Agreement

**Gaps:**

- Clarity on grievance mechanisms and legal enforceability
- Monitoring and transparency

# Community Ownership Models

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- The majority of researched utility-scale projects in the Global South (11/14) that claim a form of community ownership do not demonstrate ownership in meaningful way
- Community ownership does not necessarily equate to shares, but rather to meaningful inclusion in decision-making throughout the project's pre-, mid, and post-development phases.
- Prosperity as holistic development should aim to tackle systemic barriers, such as recourse to justice, lack of transparency, and self-determination for financial and non-financial resources.

# Gaps/Challenges

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- Availability of data online regarding financial models, governance and grievance mechanisms
- Number of operational, community-owned, utility-scale renewable projects in the Global South

# Next Steps



- Continued review of models in South and South-East Asia
- In-depth engagement with developers, communities, funders and mediators
- Launch of whitepaper (Feb/March)
- Launch of industry brief and anthology of case studies (May/June)

## Get in touch!

We'd love to hear from you

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