

CLEAN ENERGY INITIATIVES THAT EMPOWER THE FUTURE



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ABOUT VOICES OF SUSTAINABILITY

Voices of Sustainability is a thought leadership platform launched by the Zayed Sustainability Prize to explore the challenges and opportunities of the global transition to an inclusive and prosperous

future. Each month, the series hosts some of the top global thought leaders to discuss the latest trends and themes in the sustainability agenda.



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INTRODUCTION

On 31 January, the Zayed Sustainability Prize aired its 32nd episode of the virtual fireside chat series 'Voices of Sustainability,' commemorating the International Day of Clean Energy. This episode highlighted Joseph Nganga, Interim CEO at GEAPP, alongside Angela Homsji, Co-founder of recent

Zayed Sustainability Prize recipient, Ignite Power. Their discussion delved into innovative and collaborative strategies for broadening clean energy access across Africa, providing valuable perspectives on the sector's growth and challenges.



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SUMMARY

In the 32nd episode of 'Voices of Sustainability,' titled 'Clean Energy Initiatives that Empower the Future,' the series celebrated the inaugural International Day of Clean Energy with a focus on Africa. Moderated by Binu Parthan, the episode featured Joseph Nganga and Angela Homsj, two influential leaders in clean energy. They discussed how sustainable energy can drive economic growth and enhance quality of life in Africa, considering the continent's unique challenges and opportunities.

The episode opened with Binu highlighting the significance of the occasion, coinciding with IRENA's 15th anniversary. He then welcomed his distinguished guests, setting the stage by noting the increasing influence of philanthropic and private sector investments in clean energy, paving the way for a detailed and insightful discussion.

Joseph Nganga, Interim CEO of GEAPP, stressed the necessity for united efforts amidst the prevailing existential crisis. He detailed how his organisation is channelling philanthropic capital to bolster policies, regulations and private sector endeavours to meet net-zero ambitions. His focus was particularly on their initiatives in battery energy storage, aiming to foster a clean electrification approach.

Binu then shifted the spotlight to Angela, Co-founder of Ignite Power and recent Prize winner in the Energy category. Angela advocated for 'radical collaboration' among diverse stakeholders to advance clean energy in Africa. She portrayed Ignite Power's approach as groundbreaking, aiming for an entirely distributed, decarbonised, digitised, and democratised energy infrastructure, which she referred to as the '4 Ds'.



GEAPP uses concentrated philanthropic capital for policies and regulations, supporting governments, communities, and the private sector, aligning resources to rapidly achieve net-zero ambitions under the Paris agreement."

Joseph Nganga
Interim CEO
GEAPP



She emphasised Africa's proven capacity to leapfrog traditional energy development stages, adopting innovative energy solutions. This mirrors the continent's proven agility in technological advancements, exemplified by its early adoption of mobile phones and banking.

Angela delved into the significance of distributed renewable energy in Africa, noting its indispensable role in the continent's development and its potential worldwide impact. She emphasised the need for cooperation and innovation in technology, industry and finance to amplify clean energy solutions.



Ignite's energy infrastructure model, the 4 Ds – distributed, decarbonised, digitised, democratised – is reshaping infrastructure in Africa, village by village, country by country, powering 2.5 million people, and addressing the continent's significant infrastructure and power gap."

Angela Homs

Co-founder
Ignite Power

In response to a query about public-private partnerships, Joseph accentuated the pivotal role of private sector capital in realising clean energy objectives. He highlighted the necessity for collaboration across different sectors to effectively manage risks and utilise philanthropic capital.

Angela then spoke about the imperative for innovative financing strategies to attract institutional capital to the distributed renewable energy sector. She referred to the catalytic climate finance structure created by Ignite Power, designed to mobilise a substantial amount of institutional capital.

As the dialogue approached its conclusion, Joseph and Angela outlined their visions for transforming Africa's energy landscape. Joseph called for a tripling of renewable energy sources in line with COP 28 goals, highlighting the importance of cooperative efforts. Angela, emphasising action over rhetoric, urged for a swift transition to practical solutions in tackling clean energy challenges.

Binu then concluded the episode by stressing the urgency of immediate, collaborative action across different sectors to drive forward the clean energy revolution. The discussion vividly demonstrated the critical role diverse stakeholders play in realising sustainable energy objectives, especially in Africa.

The episode concluded with Joseph and Angela sharing a unified vision of optimism for clean energy's potential in driving sustainable development and combatting climate change. They highlighted the importance of continued collaboration and innovation among governments, the private sector, and philanthropic organisations to realise this goal.

This 'Voices of Sustainability' episode offered a comprehensive and inspiring outlook on Africa's clean energy landscape. Guided expertly by Binu, Joseph and Angela provided profound insights that underscored the need for collective action and strategic partnerships. Their discussion not only illuminated the path forward but also affirmed the critical role of shared efforts in shaping a sustainable and equitable energy future.

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PARTICIPANTS



Joseph Nganga

Interim CEO
GEAPP

Joseph Nganga is the Interim CEO at GEAPP and outgoing CEO of Africa Climate Summit. Mr. Nganga is a former Executive Director at the Rockefeller Foundation, a Co-founder of responsAbility Renewable Energy Holding and founded Renewable Energy Ventures. He holds a Liberal Arts degree from Queens University and completed Executive Education at Harvard Business School. He is the Chair of Funders Council at SEforAll, a Governing Council Member at Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa, and a Board Member at Carolina for Kibera.



Angela Homs

Co-founder
Ignite Power

Angela Homs is a Founder and President of Ignite Power. Through Ignite, she pioneers innovative infratech solutions, ensuring universal access to clean power and internet in emerging markets, reaching 2.5 million people across ten countries. Angela chairs the Africa Innovation Fund and serves on the investment committee of Microvest Capital. As investor at Generation IM and Goldman Sachs, she has deep experience in sustainable, tech and emerging markets' investing. Angela's nonprofit work includes leadership roles with Seeds of Peace, YPO and track II initiatives. A mathematician and economics scholar, she's also a Singularity University Executive Graduate, multilingual in French, English, Spanish, Arabic and Hebrew.



Dr. Binu Parthan

Deputy Director
Country Engagement and Partnerships , IRENA

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OUTCOMES



GEAPP's focus on large-scale philanthropic interventions in clean energy aligns resources towards significant policy and regulatory advancements, aiding the global energy transition



Ignite Power's 'radical collaboration' model demonstrates the effectiveness of combining technological innovation, industry restructuring, and financial ingenuity to scale distributed renewable energy across Africa



The emphasis on battery energy storage by the GEAPP showcases a strategic approach to balancing renewable energy integration and addressing grid stability



The catalytic climate finance structure developed by Ignite Power exemplifies the necessity of innovative financial models in attracting institutional capital for sustainable energy projects



Ignite Power's '4 Ds' strategy- distributed, decarbonised, digitised, and democratised- revolutionises energy infrastructure, setting a new standard for sustainable and accessible energy solutions



The discussion highlighted the urgent need for cohesive action across public, private and philanthropic sectors to meet COP28 commitments, particularly in tripling renewable energy resources for a sustainable future

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