

# Conference themes and research questions

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The International Growth Centre (IGC) welcomes conference speakers to submit proposals to speak on any topic related to the research themes and questions below. We are also open to considering speakers on topics relevant to energy and growth in developing countries outside those listed below.

## 1. Improving the reliability of grid services

- What power sector reforms have worked and how?
- How can the quality of grid services be improved? What strategies can increase willingness to pay for better service?
- What are the trade-offs between focusing on improved access for households versus firms?
- What is the potential for technologies like pre-paid cards, smart meters, or other schemes to improve quality?
- How to prevent electricity theft?

## 2. Rural electrification

- What are the best solutions for areas with low population density, low willingness to pay, and high costs of operation?
- What is the role and cost-effectiveness of stopgap measures like minigrids, solar panels, etc. and how can these measures support longer-term solutions?
- How best to roll out expansion of the grid?

## 3. Energy efficiency

- What are the best methods to encourage investments in energy efficiency?
- What are success cases where barriers to investment have been overcome and how?
- What is the role of municipality reforms and decentralisation in ensuring energy efficiency and energy access?

## 4. Minimising the external costs of energy consumption

- What are the effects of energy on health, welfare, pollution and climate change?
- What is the willingness to pay for reducing these effects, and what strategies can build this willingness to pay?

## 5. Largescale renewable energy sources

- What are the barriers and challenges to successful largescale renewable energy growth?
- How can largescale renewable energy development increase energy access for the poorest and support equitable growth?
- What policy mechanisms and planning tools are needed to encourage use of renewables?
- What lessons can be drawn from performance of international/regional power pools?

## 6. Opportunities from innovative design largescale centralised energy infrastructure

- What innovative planning, design, financing, implementation, and maintenance methods are available? What best practices can be adopted in developing countries?
- What design options can provide affordable, low voltage supplies to local populations and SMEs?
- What is the potential for modular approaches (where capacity is added in a phased manner for generation, transmission, and distribution infrastructure) in poor countries and regions?
- Which smart technologies can be adapted for better grid management in low income countries?