

## Renewable energy boost for world's developing countries

An innovative e-learning course that aims to take renewable energy to developing countries across the world has been created at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow.

The course has been developed as part of a project that supports the United Nations' goal of sustainable energy for all and will allow Strathclyde academics to share their world-renowned expertise in the renewable energy field.

Dr Tom Houghton, who is leading the project, from the University's Department of Electronic & Electrical Engineering, said: "This project is a fantastic initiative and will allow Strathclyde to utilise its expertise in renewable energy and provide training on the latest developments in the sector.

"The internationally available online distance learning courses will be delivered through the UNITAR e-learning platform that already offers hundreds of courses to developing countries.

"The course, aimed at decision-makers in governments and NGOs, will be moderated by a Strathclyde academic and the University will provide all content, regularly communicating with delegates to ensure support is available throughout.

"Solar energy projects in Malawi and the Gambia have already proved to be a huge success and this project will build on Strathclyde's commitment to providing useful learning in a critical field."

The project is a collaboration between Strathclyde, CIFAL Scotland and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), and has financial support from Scottish Government's Low Carbon International team.

University academics are working closely with CIFAL, a UNITAR affiliated training centre, to deliver the e-learning course. Priced to be affordable for the target audience, delegates will receive a United Nations Diploma on satisfactory completion of the course.

May East, UNITAR Fellow and CIFAL CEO, added: "Within UN circles we see energy as the golden thread that connects economic growth, increased social equity, and an environment that allows the world to thrive.

"Energy supply is today a major concern in regions such as Africa, Asia and Latin America. The World Bank estimates that approximately one third of the world's population – over two billion people - have no access to modern energy services.

“This course has the bold intention to bridge this gap and present the case on how renewable energies represent at the same time an environmental necessity and an economic opportunity.”

The University of Strathclyde has a long-standing relationship with Gambia and Malawi – developing sustainable energy capacity in these countries. This project will build on that success and play a prominent part in the UN’s Decade of Sustainable Energy for All..