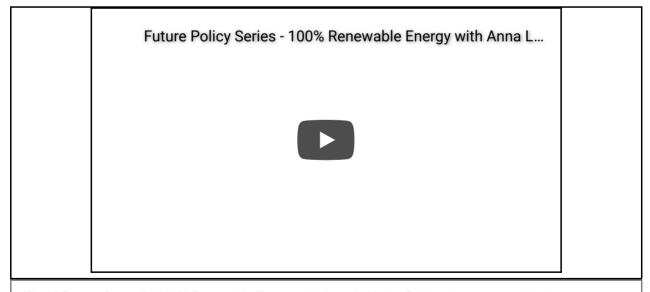# Models of energy democracy

Objective 6.2

To examine models of energy democracy in community and regional contexts and critically analyze policies accelerating energy transition and strengthening community resilience.
(100 minutes)

Under this objective you will explore community- and regional-level actors advancing renewable energy and energy conservation projects: local governments, community associations, non-profits, co-operatives, etc. Grassroots innovations (niche-level changes), together with supportive state policies (regime-level changes) are contributing to energy democracy by engaging new actors, advancing energy literacy, fostering jobs and economic development, reducing fuel poverty, and enlivening a culture of self-reliance and democratic autonomy. In this section we explore pathways forward, with an eye on the multiple obstacles and difficulties ahead.

6.6 Read "Community Energy: Broadening the Ownership of Renewables." (8 minutes)

IRENA Coalition for Action. "Community Energy: Broadening the Ownership of Renewables," 2018. **http://coalition.irena.org/-/media/Files/IRENA/Coalition-for-Action/Publication/Coalition-for-Action_Community-Energy_2018.pdf**   **(http://coalition.irena.org/-/media/Files/IRENA/Coalition-for-Action/Publication/Coalition-for-Action_Community-Energy_2018.pdf)**

6.7 Watch "Future Policy Series: 100% Renewable Energy with Anna Leidreiter." (15:54)

Future Policy Series - 100% Renewable Energy with Anna L…

World Future Council. "100% Renewable Energy with Anna Leidreiter," video, 15:54, posted by the creator to YouTube, August 2, 2016. **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i56fjDvWhb8**   **(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i56fjDvWhb8)**

6.8a Read "A Record Breaking Year for Renewable Energy and Community Energy"

World Future Council. "A Record Breaking Year for Renewable Energy and Community Energy," June 1, 2016. **https://www.worldfuturecouncil.org/record-breaking-year-for-renewables-and-community-energy/** **(https://www.worldfuturecouncil.org/record-breaking-year-for-renewables-and-community-energy/)**

6.8b watch "Community Energy—A Global Movement," the video embedded on the page. (1:17)

Community Energy − A Global Movement

World Future Council. "Community Energy—A Global Movement," video, 1:17, posted by the creator to YouTube, May 31, 2016.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o_u12-HQra4 **(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o_u12-HQra4)**

As you review the various resources in this section we encourage you to keep in mind the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) Coalition for Action description of community energy:

> **Community Energy**: "the economic and operational participation and/or ownership by citizens or members of a defined community in a renewable energy project"—regardless of size and scope of the project. Community energy is any combination of at least two of the following elements: Local stakeholders own more than half or all shares of a renewable energy project; voting control rests with a community-based organisation; and the majority of social and economic benefits are decentralized locally."

This definition applies to several examples in this module, though there are exceptions.

Community Energy is spreading across the planet, generating cost savings, revenue for community re-investment, and a cleaner local environment.

"Community Energy: Broadening the Ownership of Renewables" is a very useful summary of key factors important to broadening ownership. The authors review the concept, identify the benefits of democratizing and distributing ownership, and discuss implementation challenges—regulatory, financial, legal, and cultural barriers that can create difficulties. They conclude with actions that governments and other institutions at different levels can take to broaden support for renewables. Further resources are listed at the end of the article.