



BLOG / RESEARCH, DIALOGUE, AND POLICY IN SANTIAGO: RESET AT IAEE 2026

Research, dialogue, and policy in Santiago: RESET at IAEE 2026

📷 Photo by Rodrigo Borquez

3 August 2026

Earlier this month, the RESET Network was front and center at one of the world's leading conferences on energy economics. The conference brought together researchers, policymakers, industry leaders, and practitioners to discuss the latest evidence shaping the global energy transition. The 47th International Conference of the International Association for Energy Economics (IAEE 2026) took place from 20 to 22 July in Santiago, Chile.

For RESET, the week unfolded across conference research presentations, a members only workshop comparing experiences across countries, and a public seminar with Chilean policymakers and Global South researchers. The seminar was a natural extension of the conference, exploring how frontier research can inform the design and implementation of policies that enable the energy transition, while examining institutional conditions that could strengthen collaboration between researchers and decision-makers.

“We’d convene our members with this network to build an agenda of questions: the five or ten evidence questions actually blocking investment decisions in Chile today. Not an agenda of answers. An agenda of questions, flowing from decision-makers back into research.” Matías Cáceres, CLG Chile

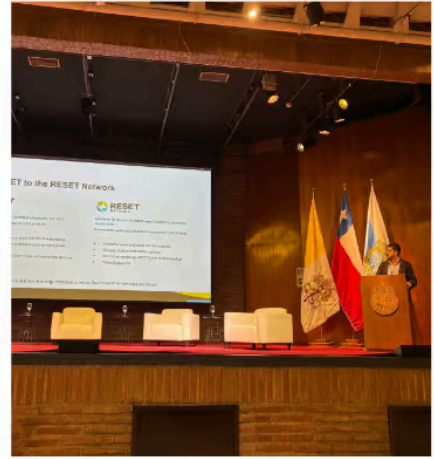
IAEE Conference

IAEE’s centerpiece was “Clean Energy Pathways for a Global South Just Transition: Evidence from the MCET Network,” moderated by Luis Fernández Intriago. First up, Rodrigo Bórquez presented the synthesis and macroeconomic perspective of a five-study collection produced under the 2025 MCET Small Grants Program. This will be published shortly as part of the EDF Economics Discussion Paper series. This was followed by presentations on three country studies:

- Manuel Portilla ([Vinken](#)) on demand response as a flexibility resource in Chile, Colombia, and Vietnam;
- Paola Acevedo ([Sustenta Honduras](#)) on integrating territorial justice into SWITCH-Honduras; and
- Tarun Sharma ([IIT Roorkee](#)) on demand-responsive pricing for India’s power sector.

RESET members also presented across the technical program:

- Tarun Sharma on India’s carbon market, chemical sector decarbonization, and material constraints in net-zero pathways;
- Mlondi Ndovela ([Centre for Sustainability Transitions, Stellenbosch University](#)) on GEMMES-SA and water-energy-food infrastructure investments;
- Camilo Herrera ([Universidad de los Andes](#)) on SWITCH-Colombia;
- Balachandra Patil ([Indian Institute of Science](#)) on firm power in India’s energy transition; and
- Luis Fernández Intriago on environmental policies and informality in Mexico.



IAEE CONFERENCE SANTIAGO, CHILE



RESET Member's Workshop

Between the conference and the public seminar, RESET convened a members-only workshop with researchers from India, Honduras, Chile, Colombia, and South Africa. The conversation turned from presenting results to comparing experiences: what does it take to move open-source modeling from the seminar room into the decisions governments make?

One theme surfaced repeatedly: **the binding constraint is rarely the model.**

"A model is not an answer; it's a conversation starter."
Mlondi Ndovela



MEMBER'S WORKSHOP

SANTIAGO, CHILE



Every team in the room has a working SWITCH implementation or comparable tool; what differs is the institutional pathway from analysis to decision. In Chile, ministries employ their own energy modelers, which raises the technical bar for engagement. In India, intermediary think tanks bridge academia and government, and credibility is built through sustained presence rather than single studies. Elsewhere, capacity and continuity inside government shape what is possible, and each change of administration can reset relationships. Where planning authorities run sophisticated proprietary models of their own, the opportunity lies in complementary questions rather than competing answers.

Two ideas to improve the pathway from modelling to policy implementation came to the fore.

- **Credibility through validation:** benchmarking open models against official expansion plans, running governments' own scenarios so differences can be discussed on equal terms, and tracking ex post how published plans compare with what real world results.
- **Extending analysis beyond the boundary of the power system,** and toward the labor market, health, justice, macro-financial, and energy access questions that governments' in-house tools are typically not built to answer. This is where the network's comparative advantage lies. Members were candid about limits: models are conversation starters, not predictions, and their value depends on being recalibrated against reality and communicated without overselling or underselling.

"It's not about selling the model. It's about selling innovative research questions." Camillo Herrera

The themes that emerged will shape the focus of RESET's working groups in the future:

From models to policy. Which institutional configurations (in-government modelers, think-tank intermediaries, NGO convenors, university consultancies) most effectively absorb model-based evidence, and how do teams sustain engagement across changes of government?

In 2011, there were no energy modelers in India; in 2025, energy modelers in think tanks; by 2030 I expect energy modelers in government.
Balachandra Patil

Credibility and validation. What benchmarking protocols make an open model credible to a planning authority, and would a systematic ex post tracking exercise, comparing plans and projections against realized outcomes, strengthen model-based advice across network countries?

"Ex post tracking of plans is when it becomes really powerful... your credibility goes up." Tarun Sharma

Beyond the boundary of the power system. What is the best architecture for linking power system models to labor market, health, justice, and macro-financial analysis: new modules, soft-linking to economy-wide models, or formal coupling? Which extensions matter most where informality dominates employment and fiscal space is thin?

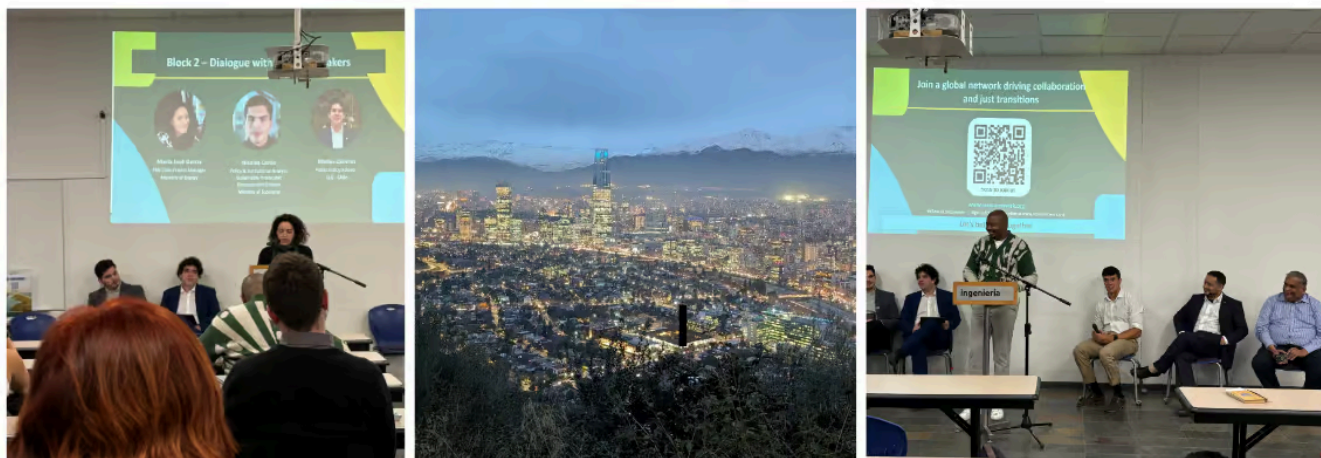
Energy access and node-level planning. Half of Honduras's schools lack electricity; work is underway to revive a node-level energy access model as an open SWITCH module, deciding between microgrids and grid extension at thousands of points. What makes off-grid investments sustainable beyond the grant that funds them?

Designing the network for impact. How should short grants be sequenced into longer engagements, and when should working groups bring modelers together with economists, regulators, and communicators as incubators for joint work?

Public seminar

The week closed with a public hybrid seminar at [Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile](#), School of Engineering: "[Cooperative Research, Evidence-Based Policy: The Global South Enabling its Just Transition](#)." The event brought RESET members together with key actors from Chile's public and private sectors, with two panels moderated by Juan Pablo Montero (PUC and RESET Advisory Group). One panel was technical, featuring Balachandra Patil, Tarun Sharma, and Manuel Portilla, while the other focused on policy, featuring [María José García](#) (Chile's Ministry of Energy), [Nicolás Cerón](#) (Chile's Ministry of Economy), and [Matías Cáceres](#) (CLG-Chile).

"External evidence plays several roles, it allows us to learn from international experience, it helps us explore future scenarios and is important when thinking about fairness and distributional impacts. Evidence does not eliminate uncertainty, but it helps us make better decisions under uncertainty." María José García, PMI-Chile Manager, Ministry of Energy



PUBLIC EVENT

SANTIAGO, CHILE

"The question is no longer whether to invest in the transition. The question is what, where, and when. Those are evidence questions." Matías Cáceres

The seminar illustrated the network's approach with a concrete case: the [MCET Chile team's collaboration with the Dominican Republic's Ministry of Energy and Mines](#). This project developed scenarios to evaluate carbon market mechanisms in the electricity sector using the open-source SWITCH model. The World Bank validated the work by incorporating the scenarios into its own evaluation and subsequently contracted the team to replicate the exercise in Chile in direct collaboration with Chile's Ministry of Energy. The model itself was handed to the Dominican Ministry, including an emphasis on building the capacity of the planning team at the National Energy Commission.

"Today we understand quite well how policies affect the system. The next step is understanding how they affect people." María José García, PMI-Chile Manager, Ministry of Energy

Research created in the South, validated internationally, and owned locally.

"Models built on local assumptions survive scrutiny; imported ones don't." Matías Cáceres

What's next?

We see our role as additive rather than duplicative and we will continue:

- convening Global South researchers around shared questions,
- supporting locally led analysis, and
- helping turn it into work that reaches decision-makers.

The week in Santiago, from the conference floor to the ministries, will be our starting point for the next round of our working groups and collaborations, and we will follow up with all who took part.

SUBSCRIBE WITH YOUR EMAIL

Join our newsletter

Sign Up



What We Do

Success Stories

Energy Modeling

Policy Solutions

Engagement

About Us

Our Members

[Our Collaborators](#)

[Our Advisors](#)

[Our Working Groups](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Join Us](#)

[Events](#)

[News](#)

© RESET Network 2026. All rights reserved.

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Open Access Statement](#)

Website by **Weave**