



Execution Discipline Will Define the Next Winners in Renewables

By Sudarshan Karweer · 14 September 2026 · growthifye.com

In renewables, value is no longer created by announcing capacity alone; it is created by executing projects on schedule, at quality, and with cost control.

The New Battleground in Renewables

For much of the last decade, renewable energy was a race for access: access to land, transmission, modules, turbines, permits, and capital. Today, in my 23 years of building and scaling businesses, I have rarely seen a sector transition so quickly from a sourcing game to an execution game. In renewable power, especially in solar, wind, and storage-linked projects, the next winners will not be those who merely secure megawatts on paper. They will be those who commission on schedule, maintain quality under pressure, and hold the line on cost discipline.

What we see across our mandates at Growthifye is clear: the market is maturing, investor scrutiny is harder, lenders are asking sharper questions, and developers can no longer assume that rising demand will compensate for weak execution. Global capital now rewards operational credibility more than narrative. That is a profound shift.

The world order in energy is also moving. Supply chains are being reorganized around resilience, industrial policy is back, and geopolitics has entered project planning in a way that many underestimated. For India, this is both a risk and an opportunity. We can emerge as one of the most important renewable execution markets in the world, but only if we improve our delivery discipline at the project level.

Why EPC Excellence Has Become Strategic, Not Operational

Many still treat EPC execution as the downstream end of project development. I disagree. EPC excellence is now a strategic differentiator.

Why? Because schedule, quality, and cost are no longer separate metrics. They are tightly linked.

- A schedule slip increases interest during construction and can trigger liquidated damages
- Quality gaps create rework, generation underperformance, and insurance complications
- Cost overruns often come not from one major shock, but from dozens of small failures in planning and coordination
- Weak execution reduces credibility with lenders, offtakers, and future investors

In a softer market, some of these issues could be absorbed. In today's environment, they compound quickly. Module prices may fluctuate, logistics windows may tighten, transmission readiness may lag, and contracting chains may become stressed. A project that looks viable in the financial model can become fragile on the ground if execution assumptions are loose.

This is particularly true in India, where the scale of renewable ambition is enormous, but the operating environment remains complex. Terrain, state-level process variation, monsoon impacts, right-of-way constraints, transmission synchronization, local stakeholder management, and vendor capability gaps can all affect outcomes. None of this is new. What is new is the cost of getting it wrong.



The Global Reset Is Raising the Bar for Project Delivery

Globally, renewable markets are entering a more disciplined phase. The era of abundant liquidity and forgiving assumptions has ended. Developers in many markets are facing higher financing costs, tougher return thresholds, more demanding grid interconnection standards, and greater scrutiny on supply-chain provenance.

Three global shifts matter for EPC strategy.

- First, supply-chain concentration is now a board-level risk. Developers are reassessing dependence on single geographies, single technologies, or single counterparties.
- Second, industrial policy in major economies is changing equipment economics. Incentives, local-content preferences, and trade barriers are altering procurement choices.
- Third, grid integration has become more complex. Intermittent renewables are no longer judged only by installed capacity, but by dispatchability, stability, and system-level performance.

What does this mean for India?

It means India cannot compete only on lower installed cost. It must compete on execution reliability, integrated engineering capability, and speed with control. Global investors and strategic partners increasingly want to see that Indian projects can be delivered with institutional-grade project governance. The good news is that India has the talent, engineering depth, and entrepreneurial energy to do exactly that. The gap is less about capability and more about consistency.

The Three Disciplines That Actually Decide Outcomes

In boardrooms, execution is often discussed in broad terms. On the ground, outcomes usually turn on a few very specific disciplines.

Schedule discipline

Most delays do not begin at site mobilization. They begin in pre-construction.

We often see projects carrying hidden schedule risk because key dependencies are treated as parallel assumptions rather than gated milestones. Land handover may be incomplete. Evacuation readiness may be optimistic. Detailed engineering may lag procurement. Foundation design may not adequately reflect geotechnical realities. Vendors may be contracted without enough scrutiny of their true delivery bandwidth.

Strong schedule discipline requires:

- A realistic integrated master schedule, not an aspirational one
- Critical-path ownership across engineering, procurement, logistics, and construction
- Weekly decision governance with escalation triggers
- Early visibility into approval bottlenecks and utility interfaces
- Monsoon-aware and terrain-aware planning in India-specific contexts

Quality discipline

Quality in renewables is still too often reduced to post-installation inspection. That is a mistake. Quality is set upstream in design standards, vendor qualification, factory inspection, logistics handling, installation methods, and commissioning protocols.

In solar and wind projects, small quality compromises can have long-tail consequences: module microcracks, cable termination issues, tracker misalignment, inverter environment mismatch, foundation inconsistencies,



SCADA integration gaps. These may not stop commissioning, but they can quietly erode plant performance for years.

The right question is not whether a project can be commissioned. The right question is whether it will perform predictably over its operating life.

Cost discipline

The weakest cost plans are the ones that appear most competitive at bid stage. I have seen this repeatedly across sectors. Unrealistic EPC pricing, underbudgeted balance-of-plant elements, incomplete contingency thinking, and poor change-order control create the illusion of competitiveness while storing up pain for later.

True cost discipline means:

- Full-life project costing, not headline EPC cost minimization
- Sensible contingency provisioning for logistics, weather, and interface risks
- Strong contract architecture with clear responsibility matrices
- Continuous productivity tracking during execution
- Rapid claim prevention through documentation and issue closure

India's Renewable Scale Demands a Different Operating Model

India is no longer in a phase where renewable execution can rely on heroic effort and improvisation alone. The scale ahead requires industrialization of project delivery.

That means moving from personality-driven execution to process-driven execution.

In practice, this requires developers, EPC players, OEMs, and financiers to align earlier and more rigorously. Design freeze discipline must improve. Site-readiness certification should be more objective. Procurement strategies need to balance price with delivery resilience. Contracting structures must reduce ambiguity in interfaces, especially where multiple packages and technologies converge.

I will offer a contrarian view here: the industry's obsession with the lowest upfront EPC quote is one of the biggest destroyers of value in Indian renewables.

A cheaper EPC award that results in a 90-day delay, higher auxiliary losses, avoidable rework, weaker availability, or more aggressive O&M interventions is not cheaper. It is simply deferred cost disguised as savings.

As projects become larger, hybridized, and more integrated with storage and grid-support functions, the penalty for poor execution will only rise. The market should start rewarding execution quality with the same seriousness that it rewards tariff competitiveness.

That will also change who wins. Not every participant in the renewable value chain is ready for this transition. Those who combine engineering depth, commercial realism, and disciplined governance will gain share. Those dependent on aggressive assumptions will struggle.

The Forward-Looking Shift: Execution Intelligence Will Become Digital and Predictive

Looking ahead, I believe the next leap in EPC excellence will come from predictive execution intelligence.

Today, many project reviews are still retrospective. Teams discover slippages after they have occurred. Cost stress is identified after invoices accumulate. Quality issues emerge after installation or commissioning. This



is too late.

The future operating model will use digital controls far more intelligently:

- Live progress tracking against the true critical path
- Vendor performance analytics across projects and geographies
- Site productivity dashboards linked to cost-to-complete forecasts
- Early-warning systems for logistics, weather, and interface disruptions
- Quality traceability from factory to field installation

This is not about adding software for its own sake. It is about creating management visibility early enough to act.

India has an opportunity here. Because so much capacity is still to be built, firms can embed better execution architecture now rather than trying to retrofit it later. In a world where capital is more selective and timelines are tighter, the firms that make execution measurable, transparent, and predictive will command a premium.

The Growthifye View

Execution excellence is no longer a back-end function in renewables. It is where project value is protected or lost.

- Schedule, quality, and cost must be governed as one integrated discipline, not three separate workstreams
- India's renewable opportunity will increasingly favor players with institutional execution capability, not just development pipelines
- The cheapest EPC award is often the most expensive project outcome when life-cycle performance is considered
- The next frontier is predictive, data-driven project control that identifies execution risk before it becomes financial loss

In renewable energy, ambition still matters. But in the phase we are entering, discipline matters more. That is true globally, and it is especially true for India as it builds at scale. The market will not ultimately reward who promised the most. It will reward who delivered with credibility.

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