

The Africa-EU Energy Partnership – Jointly Tracking the Abidjan Action Plan on Energy

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THE ABIDJAN ACTION PLAN

In November 2017, the Heads of State and Government of Member States of the African Union (AU) and the European Union (EU), the Chairperson of the African Union and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), the President of the European Council and the President of the European Commission, met in Abidjan on the occasion of the 5th AU-EU Summit. Under the theme of “Investment in Youth for Accelerated Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development”, joint strategic priorities for the 2018-2020 period were summarised in a [summit declaration](#) which has since become known as the **Abidjan Action Plan**:

- Investing in People – Education, Science, Technology and Skills Development;
- Strengthening Resilience, Peace, Security and Governance;
- Mobilising Investments for African Structural Sustainable Transformation;
- Migration and Mobility.

At the Summit, the AU and EU committed themselves to the full implementation of the Paris Agreement and Marrakech Action Plan adopted at COP22, and to this end noted the importance of **energy efficiency and the development of renewable energy** to combat climate change and its impacts. The AU and EU agreed to use the following areas and projects as indicative parameters to measure progress of the energy partnership making seven milestones:

1. **Investment in the Renewable Energy Sector**
2. **Energy Access in Africa**
3. **Decentralised Energy Structures for Local Authorities**
4. **AU-EU High-Level Intercontinental Platform for Public-Private Dialogue**
5. **Regulatory Frameworks for the Electricity Market**
6. **Solar Energy Development Programme**
7. **AU Agenda 2063 Flagship Projects**

“Europe and Africa are natural partners. We have a historic bond and we share many of today’s challenges. One of our main objectives is to turn the green and digital transformation of our economies into opportunities for the youth.”



Ursula von der Leyen,
President of the European Commission

“We are constantly reviewing and revising our priorities and actions, so our partnership delivers on the needs of both continents.”



H.E. Amani Abou-Zeid,
African Union Commissioner for Energy and Infrastructure

As recommended in the Abidjan Action Plan (AAP), the Secretariat of the Africa-EU Energy Partnership (AEEP) continues to **monitor the progress of the AAP**. In May 2018 in Addis Ababa, under the auspices of the Reference Group for Infrastructure (RGI), the AEEP Secretariat brought together different actors in the energy sector to translate the AAP into concrete activities that would be monitored. To date, the AEEP Secretariat continues to source information from different partners and institutions to update the status of implementation for reporting to the next AU-EU Summit. In this document, achievements of the seven milestones are highlighted.

1. INVESTMENT IN THE RENEWABLE ENERGY SECTOR

The AU and the EU committed to implement the African Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI) notably via the European Investment Plan (EIP) and other similar tools, with the objective to generate 10 GW of new renewable energy in Africa by 2020.

The African Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI) is set to achieve at least 10 GW of new and additional renewable energy generation capacity by 2020 and mobilise the African potential to generate at least 300 GW by 2030. Related progress is monitored by the AREI Independent Delivery Unit (IDU) - funded with 6.5 million EUR by France, Germany and the EU, as pledged at the COP22 in Marrakesh in November 2016.

The AREI IDU continued to focus on mapping the renewable energy projects in the regions, supporting individual countries or groups of countries for formulating requests and preparing proposals to the Green Climate Fund and other international funding sources. By 2019, the target of 10 GW of renewable projects was reached - 15 months ahead of schedule - following the adoption of more than 600 AREI labelled projects. More than 100 labelled projects in the AREI IDU database include information of support by EU institutions or EU member states.

"With the political will to guarantee private investment and the involvement of the financial sector in clean energy, Africa will rise to the climate challenge."



*H.E. Alpha Condé,
President of the Republic of Guinea,
AU Coordinator for Renewable Energy in Africa
and Chair of the AREI Board of Directors*

Examples of EU or EU Member States-supported AREI IDU projects include:

Hydropower Plant Ruzizi III¹

The 147 MW hydropower plant Ruzizi III will provide electricity to Rwanda, Burundi and the DRC. The project is being developed as a public-private partnership (PPP) between the three countries, a consortium of Industrial Promotion Services (IPS) and SN Power through a 25-year concession agreement. Co-funded by the AfDB together with the European Development Fund (EDF), KfW Development Bank, the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the World Bank, the power plant will contribute to strengthening regional economic integration through the creation of an electricity market.

¹ <https://www.au-pida.org/view-project/428/>

Tendaho Geothermal Project²

In Ethiopia, the European Union Africa Infrastructure Trust Fund has granted funding of EUR 8 million to the Tendaho geothermal project (12 MW), complemented with a EUR 10 million concessional loan from AFD as part of a program co-financed by the World Bank and the government of Ethiopia. This financing will enable to complete the drilling activities planned as part of the geothermal exploration.

Bakota Gorge Hydropower Project³

Another prominent example of the AREI projects is the Batoka Gorge Hydropower project, a 2,400 MW project that will increase the renewable energy balance in electricity supply of Zambia and Zimbabwe from 42% to 80%, thereby reducing both countries' CO2 emissions and bringing them in-line with NDCs. The project comes with five single transmission lines in Zambia and nine in Zimbabwe. According to the European Commission's budget database, the EU contribution to Batoka Gorge Hydro Electric Scheme (BGHES) has been at € 4.1 million. The Italian company Salini Impregilo was shortlisted for the hydropower project.

Cogeneration Power Plant⁴



© Proparco/ Raphaël Plihon

In 2018, Proparco (subsidiary of AFD) and FMO provided Scoul - Uganda's third largest sugar manufacturing company - with EUR 40 million financing for a 26MW cogeneration power plant. The plant will produce clean electricity from sugar residue at a competitive price to meet its own needs and to be sold to the national grid. The support to this project is also expected to create 860 additional jobs over the next 5 years.

² <https://www.thinkgeoenergy.com/eu-funding-of-eur-8-million-granted-for-drilling-at-tendaho-geothermal-project-ethiopia>

³ <https://www.proparco.fr/en/carte-des-projets/scoul-cogen-2018>,
<https://uk.reuters.com/article/zambia-electricity/zambia-zimbabwe-to-start-building-batoka-power-plant-next-year-idUKL8N2431QS>

⁴

https://ec.europa.eu/budget/euprojects/project/77c7907678ac815cb0538c1a47e87539_en?has_h=3564643333561313365333764

2. ENERGY ACCESS IN AFRICA

The AEEP is committed to increase access to affordable and sustainable energy in rural and underserved areas, by accelerating and leveraging mainly off-grid energy access investments.

The partnership continued to support promotion of rural electrification and clean cooking through various initiatives and instruments. Latest figures show that the number of people gaining **access to electricity** doubled from 9 million per year between 2000 and 2013 to 20 million people between 2014 and 2019, outpacing population growth. Notable progress has been recorded in countries such as Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda and Senegal. According to the IEA’s Africa Energy Outlook 2019, however, 580 million people do not have access to electricity.

According to IEA, around 900 million people in sub-Saharan Africa still lack **access to clean cooking**. If the business-as-usual pathway continues, sub-Saharan Africa will not meet the universal access goal by 2030 - mainly due to population growth of an average of 18 million people a year. 6 of the 20 countries with the largest access deficits in access to clean cooking in the world - with less than 5% of the population using clean fuels and technologies as their primary means of cooking - are in sub-Saharan Africa.

Despite the lag in data to show the up-to-date state of progress since the last AU-EU Summit, it remains clear that progress has been insufficient to reach the targets of Agenda 2030 and universal energy access as codified in SDG7. Achieving progress will require designing and implementing strategies and commitments based on a well-informed understanding of the current state and patterns of household energy use.

“One of our priorities is to promote an enabling environment for private sector participation for on-grid and off-grid generation and allow it to fill a considerable gap in the investment needed for Africa to meet the universal access by 2030.”



Rashid Ali Abdallah,
Executive Director of the African Energy
Commission (AFREC)

Currently, AFREC is developing a **methodology for clean cooking scenarios** at national levels - adapted from the WHO and World Bank recommendations - to help identify the current status on clean energy and cooking, so that policies and programmes for the future have the data needed for successful design and implementation. Supported by the AfDB and the AEEP, AFREC is also developing improved digitalised questionnaires for the African Energy Information System (AEIS) that will track energy developments in all countries in Africa, including the SDG7 indicators and publish the “year-plus-one” annual statistics as from 2021. This will make tracking easier so that policies and programmes for the future have the data needed for successful design and implementation.

The EU and European member states have significantly contributed to Africa’s ambitions for increased energy access on the continent. The EU’s **Electrification Financing Initiative (ElectriFI)** - a EUR 215 million impact investment facility has opened various country windows in Africa, including Cote d’Ivoire (10 mio EUR), Benin (5 mio EUR), Zambia (40 mio EUR) and Nigeria (30 mio EUR). To date, the initiative has reached more than 30 million beneficiaries and contributed to the installation of 250 MW renewable energy capacity.⁵



GET.invest – a multi-donor instrument funded by the EU, Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands, and Austria – promotes investments in decentralised renewable energy projects, with a focus on sub-Saharan Africa. Since its launch in 2018, more than 30 companies and projects have been successfully assisted in accessing financing resulting in 460,000t CO₂eq. emission reduction p.a. and 3.6 million additional end-users with access to clean energy.⁶ Most recently, a GET.invest client has signed a financing agreement for an 82 MW solar PV project in Guinea.⁷



Energising Development (EnDev) is an energy access partnership active in 16 African countries. EnDev is currently financed by the Netherlands, Germany, Norway, United Kingdom, Switzerland, and Sweden. By March 2019, more than 21.3 million people gained access to either electricity and lighting devices or improved cooking technology with EnDev’s support. EnDev also implements the Smart Communities Coalition Innovation Fund (SCCIF) for energy access in refugee settlements, launched in July 2020.⁸



The **AfDB’s New Deal on Energy for Africa** aims to light up and power Africa, by providing 160 GW of new capacity, 130 million new on-grid connections, 75 million new off-grid connections and providing 150 million households with access to clean cooking solutions by the year 2025. Related initiatives include: The Desert to Power (DtP) Programme to light up and power the Sahel region by building electricity generation capacity of 10 GW through photovoltaic (PV) solar systems via public, private, grid and off-grid projects by 2025. The Off-Grid Energy Access Fund, aiming to scale-up access to affordable clean energy for off-grid households in sub-Saharan Africa reached final equity close with \$59 million in November 2019. The fund is co-financed by the EU and KfW.⁹



⁵ <https://www.electrifi.eu/>

⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/projects/getinvest-mobilising-renewable-energy-investments_en

⁷ <https://www.get-invest.eu/2020/09/24/guinea-get-invest-finance-catalyst-client-signs-financing-agreement-for-82-mw-solar-project/>

⁸

[https://endev.info/content/Launch_of_the_Smart_Communities_Coalition_Innovation_Fund_\(SCCIF\)_for_energy_access_in_refugee_settlements](https://endev.info/content/Launch_of_the_Smart_Communities_Coalition_Innovation_Fund_(SCCIF)_for_energy_access_in_refugee_settlements)

⁹ <https://www.afdb.org/en/the-high-5/light-up-and-power-africa-%E2%80%93-a-new-deal-on-energy-for-africa>

3. DECENTRALISED ENERGY STRUCTURES FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The AU and the EU committed to support local authorities to establish decentralised energy structures and a bottom-up transition to a global low-carbon and climate-resilient economy and society, through various initiatives – including e.g. the "Covenant of Mayors" initiative and "Green people's energy for Africa".

To date, the EU supports over 270 cities and local governments from 36 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, representing the largest network of cities and local governments to fight climate change and accelerate sustainable access to energy.

Ongoing complementary work continues on:

- supporting the operationalisation of the Energy Centres of Excellence;
- supporting the promotion of a reliable and sustainable energy mix;
- supporting norms and standards for the energy sector to be resilient to climate change;
- working on enhancing the involvement of women and youth in the sustainable energy value chains as entrepreneurs and active users;
- accelerating the deployment of smart energy services facilitating access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy.

Since the AU-EU Summit in Abidjan in November 2017, 37 cities and municipalities have signed up to the **Covenant of Mayors for sub-Saharan Africa** programme. Success stories of the programme include:

In Mozambique, the city councils of Maputo, Boane, and Matola are working together with the Metropolitan Transport Agency for developing a sustainable transport system. A key objective of this project is to include the gender perspective in the mobility policies and urban public spaces of the metropolitan area, as well as in its transport, energy, and climate change agendas.

In Cameroon, the programme supported the development and validation of the Sustainable Energy Access and Climate Action Plan (SEACAP) in the municipality of Doumé and Yaoundé IV. The plan aims to guide the municipality's energy and climate actions to make "Doumé a low-carbon city by 2030, adapted to climatic hazards – such as bush fires and strong winds - where all inhabitants have access to safe, affordable and sustainable

"The direct link that we, mayors, have with our citizens and the impact cities can have on people's daily life make it one of the most relevant levels of action to fight climate change."



Mohammed Adjei Sowah,
Mayor of Accra

energy”.¹⁰ In September 2020, Yaoundé IV became the first Sub-Saharan African city and the first CoM SSA signatory to validate its SEACAP.¹¹

“Together with cooperatives, municipalities and the private sector, we bring solutions for a green energy supply to the rural regions of Africa. This is how we contribute to a climate-friendly economic development and create sustainable perspectives for the people.”



*Dr Gerd Müller,
Federal German Minister for
Economic Cooperation and Development*

The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) launched the **“Green People’s Energy for Africa”** initiative, running from 2018 to 2022. The initiative is designed to support the development of decentralised renewable energy systems to combat climate change and its impacts with the involvement of citizens, municipal structures, cooperatives and private companies to improve access to modern, renewable energy especially in rural areas. The countries involved in the initiative include Benin, Côte D’Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mozambique, Senegal, Uganda, Zambia and Namibia. In addition to country-specific measures, the initiative promotes renewable energy projects of common benefit across countries and strengthens partnerships between actors in Europe and Africa.¹²



¹⁰ <https://comssa.org/cameroon-doume-validates-its-climate-plan/>

¹¹ <https://comssa.org/achieving-milestones-yaounde-iv-is-the-first-com-ssa-signatory-to-validate-its-seacap/>

¹² <https://gruene-buergerenergie.org/en/>

4. AU-EU HIGH-LEVEL INTERCONTINENTAL PLATFORM FOR PUBLIC-PRIVATE DIALOGUE

The EU committed to initiate the establishment of an AU-EU high-level intercontinental platform for public-private dialogue in the field of sustainable energy investment.

The High-Level Platform on Sustainable Energy Investments (SEI Platform) is a response to the AU –EU summit’s call for greater efforts to establish the right business framework to attract responsible and sustainable investments and accelerate the implementation of the SDGs. Launched in 2018, the SEI Platform convened various fora of stakeholders from both continents to discuss actions on business and finance models, policy and regulatory frameworks and initiatives needed to unlock energy in Africa. In November 2019, the platform issued recommendations for accelerating sustainable energy investments to increase energy access, to establish a continental electricity market in Africa as well as address energy efficiency and the challenges of clean cooking solutions. An integrated distribution framework of on- and off-grid distribution services was also proposed.

To reinforce early stage support/handholding for project developers along with de-risking financing in renewable investments, the EU is supporting instruments and tools such as GET.invest, ElectrIFI, and the Green Mini-Grid Developers Help Desk hosted by AfDB. These instruments facilitate business-to-business partnerships, matchmaking and networking through African energy associations and the private sector - mainly under EU-supported investment programmes. The AU Development Agency (NEPAD) and the AfDB are increasing the participation of the private sector in energy through the Continental Business Network (CBN).

“Africa is a partner for development in many sectors. Having AEEP as a tool to establish this contact with Africa is an advantage for all of us.”



*H.E. Ambassador
Sergio Mercuri,
Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and
International Cooperation*

Since the last AU-EU Summit in Abidjan in 2017, the EU has organised various business fora in various sub-Saharan African countries. Several of these events focused on promotion of energy investments in the respective country, including the Togo-EU Economic Forum in June 2019, the Ghana-EU Business Forum in June 2019, the EU Business Forum Ethiopia in February 2020, and the Uganda-Europe Business Forum in March 2020.



5. REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS FOR THE ELECTRICITY MARKET

The AU committed to take forward the harmonisation of regulatory frameworks for the electricity market in Africa that is supported by EU TAF.

AUC and EU TAF teams continued work on the harmonisation of regulatory frameworks for the electricity market in Africa with the following achievements:

- A Strategy and Action Plan for harmonisation of regulatory frameworks for the electricity market in Africa have been developed and adopted by the AU Executive Council;
- A harmonised transmission tariff methodology has been adopted and power pools trained on how to apply it;
- Guidelines for Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS) and Energy Labelling have been adopted to promote energy efficiency;
- Policy and technical models for mini-grid development have been adopted;
- Development of a continental power master plan to underpin the continental electricity market has been initiated in support of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).



Technical Meeting of AUC and EU TAF on 2-4 October 2019 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia © EEAS

6. SOLAR ENERGY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The partnership committed to support continental solar energy development programmes for Africa.

The partnership is supporting the development of a continental solar energy development programme for Africa. A study by the AUC supported by the AEEP in 2018 revealed that the renewable energy market remains underdeveloped in Africa and the actual deployment of solar energy has been way below expectation due to policies uncondusive to attracting private sector participation. The AUC is now developing a Solar Energy Policy Framework (SEPF) for a strong private sector involvement, based on a regional planning system and a more effective monitoring and evaluation system. Several African countries have embarked on ambitious programmes on solar energy. The top three countries for solar power generation in Africa are Egypt, Morocco and South Africa.

Benban Solar Park¹³

“One of our goals is to improve the energy mix by using sustainable resources, such as solar and wind. We have an ambitious target: to reach 20% of total capacity from renewables by the year 2022.”



H.E. Dr. Mohamed Shaker El-Markabi, Minister of Electricity and Renewable Energy, Egypt

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) co-finances the construction of the Benban solar park in Egypt. The first plant (30MW) began generation in January 2019. To date, EBRD has approved a US\$ 500 million framework to support the construction. Once completed, the 16 plants financed by EBRD will deliver 750 MW of solar photovoltaic capacity which is more than half of the park’s 1 465 MW contracted capacity

¹³ <https://www.ebrd.com/news/2017/ebrd-approves-us-500-million-for-private-renewable-projects-in-egypt.html>



Desert to Power Initiative¹⁴

The AfDB has embarked on a huge “Desert to Power Initiative” for solar projects across the Sahel region, which is expected to connect 250 million people with electricity by 2025. The ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE), with the support of the EU and the World Bank has developed an implementation strategy for the Solar Corridor under the West Africa Clean Energy Corridors (WACEC) Initiative.¹

Noor Power Station¹⁵

Noor Power Station (510 MW) in Morocco is the world's largest concentrated solar power plant. KfW contributed 830 million euros to the total investment of 2.3 billion EUR. The Agence Française de Développement (AFD) contributed 150 million EUR to the solar complex, 120 million EUR were provided by the European Union. Also supported by the KfW, Morocco recently started the selection process for the Noor Atlas projects, a 200 MW scheme to deploy seven PV plants in the south and east of the country.¹

¹⁴ <https://www.afdb.org/en/topics-and-sectors/initiatives-partnerships/desert-power-initiative>

¹⁵ <https://www.kfw.de/stories/umwelt/erneuerbare-energien/solarstrom-aus-der-wueste/>



Noor Power Station © Masen

7. AU AGENDA 2063 FLAGSHIP PROJECTS

The AU and the EU highlighted their intention to support implementation of the AU Agenda 2063 Flagship Projects, e.g. technical and complementary studies for the Grand Inga Dam Project, packaging the project for bankability, financing and construction.

In 2008, the European Investment Bank (EIB) lent EUR 110 million to the DRC Government to benefit the Société Nationale d'Électricité (SNEL), the public electricity company, for the rehabilitation and expansion of existing facilities at and around the Grand Inga Hydropower plants. The loan aimed to finance the construction of the second transmission line between Inga and Kinshasa and the rehabilitation of three substations in the Katanga region.¹⁶ In August 2020, interest by a German business delegation to invest in the mega-dam was reported.

Grand Inga Hydropower Project¹⁷

¹⁶ <https://www.eib.org/en/press/all/2008-143-premier-pret-de-la-bei-en-republique-democratique-du-congo-depuis-1986>

¹⁷ <https://www.africaoilandpower.com/2020/08/14/german-investors-interested-in-funding-drcs-inga-iii-dam/>

The overall objective of the Grand Inga Hydropower Project Phase 3 is to generate 11,050 MW of electricity. Additionally, it foresees transmission lines of 2,000 km within DRC and 3,000 km across borders to connect with Southern Africa and East Africa. Connection to South Africa will take place via the Southern Africa Power Pool's (SAPP) power lines, while Nigeria will be linked through the West Africa Power Pool and Angola via a direct interconnector. As of 2020 the technical and complementary studies of the Grand Inga Hydropower project Phase 3 have been completed, thereby enabling the tendering stage to be reached. A pre-concession contract is expected to be signed so that preliminary works can be commissioned by the end of 2020.

Transmission Interconnector

The transmission interconnector connecting the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP) with the Eastern African Power Pool (EAPP) known as ZTK (Zambia-Tanzania-Kenya) will make the largest power pool on the continent and one of the most essential components of the North-South (Cape to Cairo) power transmission corridor – with 905 km for the Zambian section, 670 km for the Tanzanian section and 209 km for the Kenyan section, it constitutes a significant portion of the 8,000 km total. Preparations were made possible with financial support from the European Commission and the World Bank. In 2019, the project reached transaction support and the financial close stage, with funding for construction provided by the World Bank. The construction has started and is ongoing with the 220kV transmission line in Tanzania being upgraded to 400 kV; commissioning is expected in 2022. In 2019, the Western Transmission Corridor in Southern Africa was repackaged into three project components: a) Zimbabwe - Zambia, b) Zimbabwe - Botswana and c) Zambia - Namibia.

“The Continental Power System Master Plan will ensure that competitive electricity markets are developed at regional and continental levels, creating unique opportunities to optimally utilize Africa’s vast energy resources for the benefit of Africa.”



*Prof. Mosad Elmissiry,
Senior Energy Advisor to AUDA-NEPAD’s CEO*



Integrated Continental Transmission Network

The AU Energy Ministers have now decided to create an Integrated Continental Transmission Network (ICTN), that will link all the power utilities within each of the African regional power pools and interconnect all the regional power pools to create a Single Africa Electricity Market. This aims to facilitate the physical integration of the continent in support of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). A study has been commissioned by AUDA NEPAD - supported partly by the EU - and is expected to be completed in the next 2-3 years to develop a Continental Power System Masterplan that will determine the physical generation and transmission infrastructure to facilitate operationalisation of the Single Africa Electricity Market.

TRACKING ENERGY IMPACT

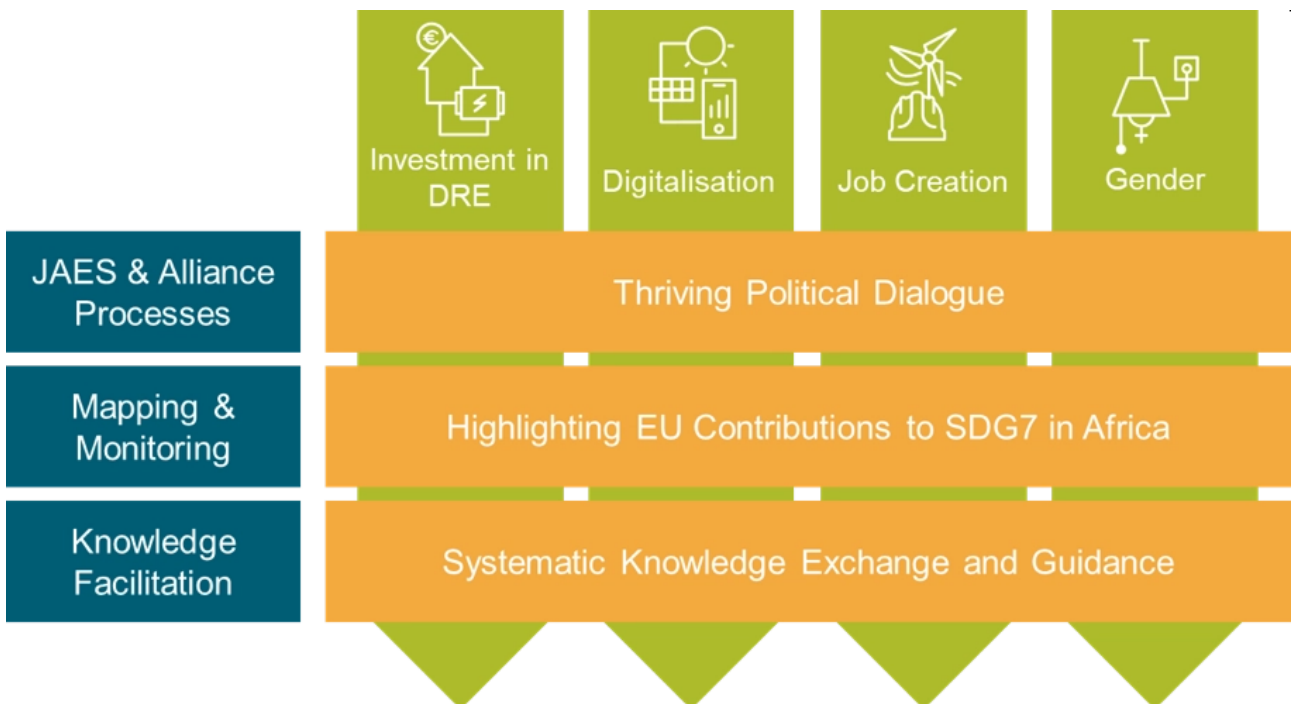
With large renewable energy projects underway, with new bicontinental ties, strengthened frameworks for clean energy investment, and active municipalities the Abidjan Action Plan has seen both continents achieve a lot of headway on their path to a sustainable future.

Meanwhile, it is clear that the cooperation between Africa and Europe has become even more dynamic to bring the joint energy and climate goals into reach and allow delivery on joint aspirations as captured in the Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030.

As AU-EU cooperation is nearing a new growth level, the commitment of tracking the impact of energy initiatives and programmes has as a critical vector for sustainable development on the ground.

About the Africa-EU Energy Partnership (AEEP)

The Africa-EU Energy Partnership (AEEP) connects the two continents to facilitate the achievement of universal access to affordable, sustainable and modern energy in Africa. It does this by supporting and informing relevant political processes and initiatives across the two continents, by mapping, monitoring and convening relevant actions and stakeholders, and by enhancing data and knowledge for decision-making.



AEEP activities and topics

The AEEP is supported by its Steering Group

