

# POWER SHIFT

*As a top-level advocate for the advancement of infrastructure on the continent, the Infrastructure Consortium for Africa is driving the focus on renewable energy investment*

Renewable energy is set to play a key role in achieving universal access to power in Africa, accelerating economic development and reducing poverty – and the Infrastructure Consortium for Africa (ICA) will be vocal in advocating for increased investment.

When African heads of state launched the African Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI) in late 2015, they pledged to ensure universal access to power by committing to a target of 300 GW of renewable energy generation capacity by 2030.

With more than 600 million Africans currently living without access to power, success in greatly increasing the continent's energy capacity through the development of clean, renewable energy would serve to drive economic growth and greatly reduce poverty.

Moreover, through technology transfer and by developing renewable and low-carbon technologies in Africa, employment opportunities will be increased and skills developed in every region of the continent, further enhancing the positive economic impact made by growing renewable energy capacity.

In the days prior to the AREI launch at the UN's COP21 climate talks in Paris (December 2015), the ICA held its

annual meeting in Abidjan, where the focus was on how best to implement renewable energy initiatives in Africa.

Attended by stakeholders from across the continent and a range of private sector investors and developers with experience in completing successful renewable energy projects in Africa, the meeting considered how best to develop an effective framework for co-operation among regional initiatives and partners for promoting increased investment in African renewable energy.

Participants at the meeting were confident that adequate capital could be attracted to invest in renewable energy in Africa, provided that a pipeline of well-prepared 'bankable' projects could be developed – a conclusion backed by research carried out on behalf of the ICA in 2015.

African leaders have shown their political will and commitment by pledging to achieve 300 GW of renewable energy generation capacity by 2030, and the ICA is confident this will be complemented by the continued development and implementation of stable economic policies – necessary to stimulate, and allow for an acceptable return on, investment. The ICA is also confident that pan-African and regional



The ICA recognises that increased investment in renewable energy initiatives holds myriad benefits



Access to reliable power for all Africans is key to the ICA

organisations as well as national institutions and authorities will step forward to play an important role in achieving the aims of the AREI, by introducing transparent frameworks, adopting clear regulatory processes, developing a positive enabling environment and building capacity – all serving to drive forward the preparation, development and implementation of renewable energy projects.

The ICA also believes there should be greater harmonisation of renewable energy initiatives, planning and programmes at pan-African, regional and sub-regional levels, in order to avoid overlap and duplication.

The sharing of best practice between countries as well as regions and sub-regions, and learning lessons from renewable energy projects that have been successfully implemented, is extremely important. Such sharing of information and experiences would help to overcome challenges related to financial issues, such as tariffs and affordability.

Some renewable energy technologies are able to be introduced rapidly. It therefore stands to reason that all technologies – and all sizes of projects, from mini-grid projects to major developments, both on-grid and off-grid, covering generation, transmission and distribution – should be welcomed and encouraged. And to help drive consistent and sustainable economic growth, it is important that there are renewable energy projects and initiatives covering the whole continent.

The ICA believes that recognition must also be given to the positive economic impact that will be derived from renewable energy development in terms of local job creation, technology transfer, technical upskilling and the establishment of facilities on the continent to

develop renewable energy technologies and manufacture equipment.

Renewable energy has the potential to be a game changer for Africa. It's the perfect time for national, regional and international initiatives to expand and accelerate their efforts to promote renewable energy investment across the continent.

#### **ABOUT THE ICA**

Established at the 2005 G8 Summit, the ICA's primary role is to help reduce poverty and increase economic growth throughout the continent by supporting and promoting increased investment in African infrastructure, from both public and private sources.

The ICA's vision is for all Africans to have access to sustainable and reliable infrastructure, including energy, transport, water and ICT.

ICA members include the governments and development agencies of G8 countries, the World Bank Group, African Development Bank Group, European Commission, the European Investment Bank and the Development Bank of Southern Africa. In 2013, South Africa became the first G20 non-G8 member country to join the ICA.

The consortium functions as a high-level advocate for the advancement of infrastructure in Africa. It informs, educates and communicates with a broad audience about the status of infrastructure investment in Africa through its knowledge products and by convening meetings and facilitating dialogue among stakeholders.

The ICA's annual report offers a highly comprehensive annual summary of infrastructure investments in Africa. Visit the ICA's website, [www.icafrica.org](http://www.icafrica.org), where you can download the summary as well as subscribe to @ISSUE, the ICA's newsletter. ■



ICA Secretariat

c/o African Development Bank  
CCIA Building, Avenue Jean-Paul II  
01 BP 1387, Abidjan 01, Côte d'Ivoire

Tel: +225 20 26 42 80

Email: [icasecretariat@afdb.org](mailto:icasecretariat@afdb.org)

[www.icafrica.org](http://www.icafrica.org)