

CIVIL SOCIETY RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE AfDB ON ENERGY ACCESS (2018)



The African Coalition for Sustainable Energy & Access ([ACSEA](#)) and the Alliance of Civil Society Organizations for Clean Energy Access ([ACCESS](#)) bring together organizations and networks who work on furthering access to clean energy across Africa. Many of our members work with vulnerable communities to demonstrate how access to energy can strengthen livelihoods and empower women, whilst others focus on policy and research efforts. Based on this experience we offer the following recommendations to the Bank - in the spirit of furthering progress towards its aims of universal access to energy, and inclusive industrialisation:

- **Accelerate the ambition to promote Decentralised Renewable Energy to provide access to energy:** We strongly commend the AfDB for setting an aspirational target of “off-grid” electricity access, targeting 75 million connections by end of 2025 under its New Deal on Energy. If realised, this will go a long way in ensuring that communities have access to energy. The Facility for Energy Inclusion (FEI) is an indication of the bank’s commitment to this end. To accelerate progress, we recommend that the bank match its ambitious energy access targets with financing, by allocating at least one third of its energy budget towards clean cooking and distributed renewables with a focus on African-owned small energy enterprises and affordable rural consumer credit for clean energy solutions.
- **Spearhead energy for productive use:** Industrialization for Africa will not happen if energy is not provided to unlock the growth and jobs opportunities available, in both urban, and rural areas. Access to household energy is critical, but the need to deliver higher levels of power for productive uses and essential services, particularly in rural Africa, is equally paramount. For example, the continent’s small-scale farmers can be the engine of Africa's structural transformation, if they are supported to increase their productivity, and add value to their goods. Investments in solar powered irrigation and agro-processing as well as mini-grids, complemented by business development support for local entrepreneurs and farmers can best meet their productive needs. We encourage the Bank’s energy and agriculture complexes to work with interested foundations, investors and CSOs to explore a pilot project in this area.
- **Champion the right approaches at national level:** As a respected knowledge broker, we call on the Bank to work with governments and civil society to: champion integrated energy planning at a national level, to ensure the optimum mix of both on- and off-grid approaches; promote the policy reforms needed to operationalise SDG7; and ensure the provision of complementary supporting services (eg social, essential and extension) to help communities take maximum advantage of energy services to strengthen their livelihoods.
- **Participation of civil society:** The bank will benefit from greater engagement of civil society organizations and practitioners to ensure energy is seen as part of an integrated approach for local development. Energy needs for education, healthcare, agriculture and other livelihoods can be better integrated into Country Strategy Papers and other development-oriented projects by increasing meaningful participation of CSOs and practitioners and implementing the Bank’s ‘CSO Engagement strategy’.
- **Measure what matters:** Towards achieving the above, we call on the Bank to adopt clear metrics, that build on existing best practices across other developmental agencies, to track energy investments and measure developmental impacts.