

## CIVIL SOCIETY RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE AfDB ON ENERGY ACCESS (2019)

### Introduction

Alliance of Civil Society Organizations for Clean Energy Access (ACCESS) and its member organizations/networks have been promoting access to clean energy across Africa, both in terms of policy influence as well as implementation of energy projects on the ground targeting the most vulnerable communities.

Through our work with communities, ACCESS and members have learnt lessons and experiences worth sharing. At the same time, through our policy and research work, we have come across various issues that we would like to bring to the attention of the bank in order to ensure that universal access to energy can help share the benefits of growth more widely as part of an inclusive industrial policy. This will require vision and commitment from political leaders but also from the Bank and the broader development community, who will provide support through financing, technical assistance, capacity building, continuous dialogue and advisory services.

### KEYS ASKS TO THE BANK

#### **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 for Africa (NDEA) Strategy. If realised, this will go a long way in ensuring that communities have access to energy. The US\$ 500 million Facility for Energy Inclusion (FEI) with the approval of a \$100 million seed financing package launched by the bank in December 2016 is an indication of the bank’s commitment to this end.

However, we are mindful of the fact that this, although a step in the right direction, is still not sufficient. We recommend that the bank substantially increases funding to DRE in order to target rural communities in Africa. Beyond finance, the Bank as a respected knowledge broker, can champion policy reforms in-country – forming a strong partnership with civil society to promote the right kind of enabling environments

**Prioritize energy for productive use:** Access to household energy is critical. The need to deliver higher levels of power for productive uses across economies, including in rural parts of 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 decentralised energy such as solar irrigation or mini-grids can best meet their productive needs, especially for agri-MSMEs that operate in areas beyond the grid.

**Do not compartmentalize the high 5s:-** The bank needs not to look at the high 5s as separate priorities but instead, as mutually inclusive of one another. Light up and power Africa priority has a direct correlation with the industrialization strategy and so is with the rest of the high 5s. Whereas each year the bank has been focusing its annual meetings on a particular theme informed by the high 5s, it will be critical to consider how other priorities are well integrated within the particular year's priority focus.