



WBG–IMF Annual Meetings

POWERING PEOPLE, BUILDING RESILIENCE: MAKING MISSION 300 COUNT

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Inclusive, pro-poor financing, planning, delivery
and monitoring of Mission 300

Position paper

access

Alliance of Civil Society
Organisations for
Clean Energy Access

Powering People, Building Resilience: Making Mission 300 Count

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In brief

Mission 300 (M300) reports that more than 50 million people have been connected to electricity, a milestone toward its goal of 300 million by 2030. That is welcome. But 563 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa still live without power, and the rural gap is growing. As finance ministers gather in Bangkok, ACCESS asks the World Bank Group, the African Development Bank, Executive Directors, Compact governments and donors for five changes to make Mission 300 count.

Five asks at a glance

Ask	Addressed to	By when	How we will know
1. Make Mission 300 financing fit for purpose and pro-poor with grants and concessional finance first and electricity people can afford	World Bank Group, AfDB, donors	Spring Meetings 2027	Affordability support funded and published in every Compact
2. Make Mission 300 investment reach electricity-poor communities and countries with dedicated finance for fragile contexts and informal settlements	World Bank Group, AfDB	Spring Meetings 2027	At least 15% of Mission 300 finance reserved for fragile and conflict-affected contexts, with investment plans for informal settlements
3. Rebalance Mission 300 investments towards decentralised renewable energy, the least-cost way to reach most energy-poor people	World Bank Group, AfDB, governments	First annual targets by Annual Meetings 2027; parity by 2030	Annual targets toward 1:1 investment parity by 2030

Ask	Addressed to	By when	How we will know
4. Design Mission 300 around communities' development needs through inclusive, locally owned and cross-sectoral planning for jobs, health and education	Compact governments, delivery units	End of 2027	Cross-sector plans and technical assistance in place
5. Make Mission 300 transparent and accountable by publishing results and verifying them independently and giving civil society a seat	World Bank Group, AfDB, Executive Directors	Baseline before Spring Meetings 2027; Compact reports and civil society mechanism by Annual Meetings 2027	Baseline, annual Compact reports and a civil society mechanism published

The World Bank Group and IMF Annual Meetings open in Bangkok on 12 October under the host country's theme, "Thailand's New Horizons: Empowering People, Building Resilience", with job creation at the heart of the World Bank Group's agenda.¹ Our title, "Powering People, Building Resilience", takes its cue from that theme. The host's agenda also champions reform of global financial structures to support equitable energy transitions and climate adaptation, and universal energy access belongs at the heart of that conversation.² Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 7 – affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all by 2030 – is the foundation of socially just energy transitions and climate resilient economies, and a precondition for the jobs and resilience that Bangkok will discuss.

The latest Tracking SDG 7 report (2026) gives a sobering assessment of current progress: Sub-Saharan Africa is adding about 42 million electricity connections a year, but its population is growing almost as fast, so each year's connections are only about 4 million ahead of population growth, and the number of people without power is barely falling. Today 563 million people in the region still lack electricity, and Sub-Saharan Africa is the only region where the rural access deficit has grown, from 376 million people in 2010 to 447 million in 2024. At this pace over half a billion people will remain without electricity in 2030. Almost a billion in the region cook with polluting fuels, and progress towards clean cooking is barely keeping pace with population growth.^{3,4}

Finance is also moving in the wrong direction. International public finance for clean energy in Sub-Saharan Africa fell from USD 7.2 billion in 2023 to about USD 5 billion in 2024. Across developing countries, 80% of international public finance for clean energy comes as debt and only 13% as grants, adding to pressure on already tight public budgets.^{3,5} In Sub-Saharan Africa, more than a third of countries are already in, or at high risk of, debt distress, so how Mission 300 is financed matters as much as how much.⁶

Mission 300, launched by the World Bank Group and the African Development Bank in April 2024, is the most ambitious effort yet to close the gap, aiming to connect 300 million people across Africa by 2030 with scaled-up concessional finance. Thirty-six countries have now launched National Energy Compacts, according to senior World Bank Group and African Development Bank energy directors.^{7,8} Although Mission 300 covers Africa as a whole, this paper draws mainly on Sub-Saharan Africa data, where the deficit is concentrated.

In June, the World Bank Group and the African Development Bank announced that more than 50 million people have been connected across 40 countries.⁹ This is welcome news, and ACCESS supports the goal of reaching 300 million people. But questions remain over how much of this is new finance and new connections. Results are counted from July 2023, nine months before the April 2024 launch, and include projects approved before Mission 300 began.^{7,10} ACCESS therefore asks three plain questions: since when is progress counted, how is credit for new connections attributed, and what counts as 'connected' in terms of reliability and affordability? Transparent, independently verifiable reporting is critical to Mission 300's credibility and success. More inclusive and targeted approaches to financing, planning and implementing Mission 300 investments are also critical. This is particularly important as energy-poor people overwhelmingly have low incomes, experience multidimensional poverty, and live in remote, rural areas affected by fragility, conflict, or displacement.

These asks build on ACCESS's October 2025 policy brief, which first called for ring-fenced concessional finance, a decentralised renewable energy priority framework and a civil society engagement mechanism.¹¹ To this end, ACCESS calls on the World Bank Group, the African Development Bank, their Executive Directors, Compact governments and donors to commit to the following:



Make Mission 300 financing fit for purpose and pro-poor with grants and concessional finance first and electricity people can afford.

Private finance has a central role in Mission 300, particularly in generation, distribution and technology development. But given the conditions of the energy-poor, concessional and grant finance should carry the first loss. For energy-poor households, affordability remains a binding constraint: in Sub-Saharan Africa only 16% of people without electricity can afford the monthly payments for a basic Tier 1 solar kit (22% worldwide).¹² The Tracking SDG 7 report highlights the importance of increasing affordability support, including social protection (energy safety nets), connection subsidies and lifeline tariffs.³ These should be integrated into every National Energy Compact, and backed by dedicated financing and technical assistance, including a dedicated energy safety net fund as ACCESS proposed in 2025.¹¹



Make Mission 300 investment reach electricity-poor communities and countries with dedicated finance for fragile contexts and informal settlements.

Fragile and conflict-affected countries are home to 428 million people without electricity, almost unchanged since 2022. This includes the Democratic Republic of Congo, where 84.7 million people lack electricity.³ At least 15% of Mission 300 finance should be reserved for fragile and conflict-affected contexts. More than 1.16 billion people lived in slums and informal settlements in 2024, and in Sub-Saharan Africa more than half of urban residents live in inadequate housing.^{13,14} Many households depend on shared meters or informal resale, with poor reliability and high costs, yet this is not treated as an energy access issue. When IIED reviewed the Mission 300 Compacts published by October 2025, none included targeted energy access programmes

for informal settlements.¹⁵ Mission 300 should develop investments to promote safe, formal and affordable connections in these communities. This could also enhance demand and reduce the cost of electrification investments.

3

Rebalance Mission 300 investments towards decentralised renewable energy, the least-cost way to reach most energy-poor people.

Decentralised renewable energy (DRE), such as solar home systems and mini-grids, delivered 55% of new connections in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2020–22.^{12,16} Mission 300 itself expects to reach around half of the people it connects through DRE.⁸ Yet current investment falls short of what the DRE sector needs to fulfil its potential, and fiscal space is tightening, according to the Tracking SDG 7 report.³ Mission 300 should back the significant role to be played by DRE by moving towards 1:1 investment parity between grid extension and DRE by 2030, with annual targets. Consistent with the Bank's focus on de-risking and local-currency finance, Mission 300 should scale up local-currency facilities for DRE and clean cooking enterprises in currency-volatile markets.

4

Design Mission 300 around communities' development needs through inclusive, locally owned and cross-sectoral planning for jobs, health and education.

More inclusive project planning of Mission 300 investments, ensuring they are aligned with energy-poor people's local realities and priorities, will enhance uptake. Stimulating productive use of energy (PUE) is widely regarded as critical to the economic impact of access, yet it is still to be tested at scale.¹⁷ Combining electrification with other forms of support to ensure sustainable PUE and enhanced job creation, as well as delivery of community services like health and education, would maximise the reach of Mission 300 investments and support the Bank's jobs agenda.¹ Because Mission 300 is an electricity programme, e-cooking offers a practical link to clean cooking: integrating e-cooking loads into Mission 300 investments at household, institutional and productive levels could help to enhance their viability and unlock progress on clean cooking.¹⁸

Compact Delivery and Monitoring Units (CDMUs) should receive dedicated technical assistance so that inclusive design becomes standard practice, and should seek opportunities to coordinate Mission 300 action with agriculture, enterprise, health and education initiatives.

5

Make Mission 300 transparent and accountable by publishing results and verifying them independently and giving civil society a seat.

Public scrutiny of energy access financing flows is hampered by a lack of clearly reported data. The OECD Creditor Reporting System (CRS) used by the World Bank Group and AfDB has no dedicated category for reporting energy access investments. Mission 300 investment plans should be published with annual reports for each Compact, broken down by energy technology, financing instrument and service level, and disaggregated by gender, age, disability, income and location. The African Development Bank and the World Bank Group should report against a single, shared framework so that results are comparable. The Banks should publish the baseline, start date and attribution method behind the 50 million figure, and new finance and connections should be distinguished from projects approved prior to Mission 300. Results should be independently verified. Mission 300 should also finance independent monitoring of social and environmental risks and impacts, with gender equality, disability and social inclusion indicators.

Mission 300 Compacts should have transparent frameworks for monitoring and evaluating the implementation and impact of their investments. National Compact design processes should include structured participation by civil society and energy-poor communities, aligned with standards such as the World Bank's Environmental and Social Standard 10 (ESS10) on stakeholder engagement, as Sierra Leone and Comoros have committed to.¹⁹ A formal Civil Society Engagement Mechanism with accredited participation, including women's organisations, in Mission 300 governance should be created at national (CDMU) level, with a similar mechanism at World Bank Group and AfDB headquarters level.

Some Compacts already show what this can look like. Comoros has placed civil society representatives in its delivery unit and committed to annual public reports broken down by sex and vulnerable groups, while Sierra Leone has committed to annual national consultations on its monitoring plan and to citizen consultations on tariffs and connection policies.^{20,21}

ACCESS and its members stand ready to support delivery of Mission 300's vision. We offer to co-design the Civil Society Engagement Mechanism, support inclusive Compact design and delivery, share evidence from the ground, and contribute to independent impact monitoring.

"Fifty million connections is real progress, and we want Mission 300 to succeed. But success has to be counted honestly and shared fairly. Publish the data, verify the results and bring communities to the table, and Mission 300 can become the model for how energy access is done."

– Wentland Muhatiah, Senior Advocacy and Policy Research Officer, ACCESS Coalition

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About ACCESS

Founded in 2014, the Alliance of Civil Society Organisations for Clean Energy Access (ACCESS) is a network of more than 100 civil society organisations, researchers and practitioners working across Sub-Saharan Africa and developing Asia. We aim to accelerate delivery of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 7, building socially just energy transitions that support climate-resilient development.

ACCESS's 2026–2030 strategy has four interlinked change areas:

- 1** Transforming the public financing architecture for energy access, with a particular focus on the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the World Bank as the biggest providers of energy finance in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- 2** Strengthening national SDG 7 and related policy frameworks in energy access deficit countries.
- 3** Scaling inclusive, cross-sectoral planning with energy as an enabler of wider development impact.
- 4** Strengthening civil society and energy poor communities' participation and voice in energy governance at national, regional and international level to ensure transparency and accountability of investments and policies.

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