

EnergyNet

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Under the Patronage of
The Ministry of Electricity and
Energy, South Africa



electricity & energy

Department:
Electricity and Energy
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Forum Sponsor

Sun Africa

Renewable energy solutions

**Industrialists.
In one place.**



africa energy forum

16-19 June 2026 • CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

Post-Forum Report

Building Africa's Industrialised Future

Thank you to all Sponsors and Partners

Forum Sponsor Sun Africa Renewable energy solutions		
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Global Partner	Sustainable Finance Partner	YES! Youth Energy Summit Powered by
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Thank you to all Sponsors and Partners

Sponsors

























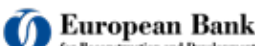












































































Media Partners













Reflecting on aef 2026

Dear Colleague

We were delighted to welcome you back to Cape Town this June for the 28th edition of the Africa Energy Forum (aef) and the Youth Energy Summit (YES!).

The central theme of aef 2026 was 'Building Africa's Industrialised Future' where a new era was discussed – a shift towards an industrialisation discourse where managing Africa's natural resources effectively can fund world-class infrastructure, create jobs, grow agriculture, and build an energy and water secure future.

aef 2026 saw four days of discussions around industrialisation through the various lenses of: Decentralised Energy and Access; Transmission and Baseload; Africa for Africa; Critical Minerals as a Catalyst for Industrialisation; Energy Financing and Trading; Technology; and not forgetting a full day exploring Mission 300's achievements to date and the next cohort's strategies.

We were also excited to once again host the Youth Energy Summit (YES!) as part of aef 2026, under the theme "Empowering Today's Entrepreneurs – Building Tomorrow's Industrialists". Impact leaders came together to present scalable initiatives that will create entrepreneurship opportunities in Africa's energy sector. Supporting industry partners led interactive workshops to build practical skills for the 500 young people in attendance.

Huge thanks to all sponsors, partners, speakers, exhibitors and attendees who made this edition happen – we couldn't do it without you. We hope that you went away brimming with new connections, knowledge and ideas.

We look forward to welcoming you all back to aef 2027 in Dubai next June!



Gemma Gosling
Head of Production
EnergyNet

The Africa Energy Forum exceeded expectations and delivered an electrifying atmosphere befitting the scale and urgency of Africa's evolving energy landscape. The quality of the discussions was highly energising, insightful and forward-looking. The atmosphere was vibrant, professional and inspiring, reinforcing the Forum's position as a premier platform for advancing Africa's energy dialogue.

Congratulations to EnergyNet on delivering an exceptional and memorable Africa Energy Forum 2026 in Cape Town.

Nomfundo Maseti, Full Time Regulator Member: Piped Gas Regulation, National Energy Regulator of South Africa (NERSA), South Africa

Countries Represented

Audience in Numbers

2,722 Attendees




980

Sponsors and
Exhibitors



448

Speakers



326

Public sector &
regulators



453

Developers



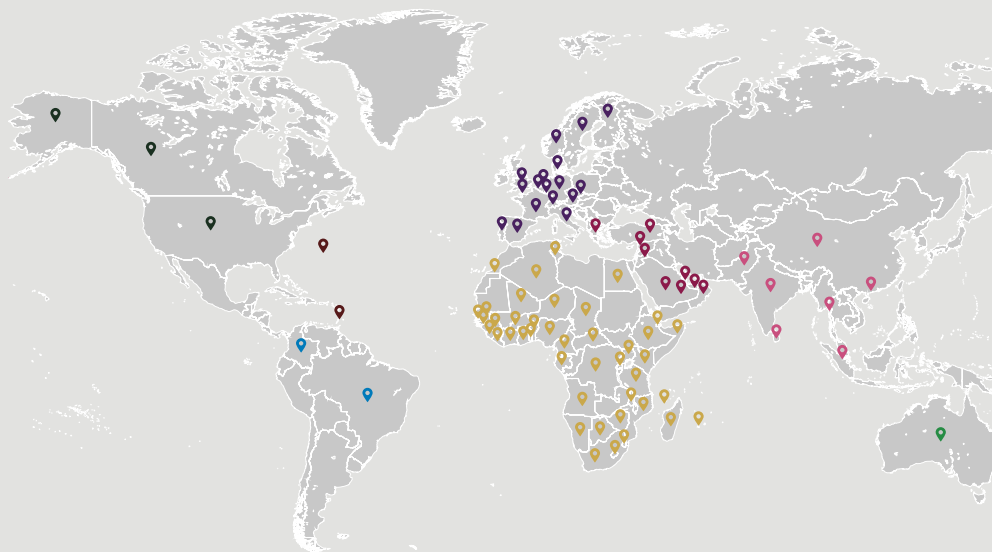
22

Ministers

Attendance from 81 countries

Algeria	Jordan
Angola	Kenya
Australia	Lebanon
Austria	Lesotho
Barbados	Liberia
Belgium	Luxembourg
Benin	Madagascar
Bermuda	Malawi
Botswana	Mali
Brazil	Mauritius
Burkina Faso	Morocco
Cameroon	Mozambique
Canada	Namibia
Central African Republic	Netherlands
Chad	Niger
China	Nigeria
Colombia	Norway
Comoros	Oman
Côte d'Ivoire	Pakistan
Czech Republic	Portugal
Denmark	Qatar
Djibouti	Rwanda
DR Congo	Saudi Arabia
Egypt	Senegal
Eswatini	Sierra Leone
Ethiopia	Singapore
Finland	Somalia
France	South Africa
Gabon	Spain
Gambia	Sri Lanka
Germany	Sweden
Ghana	Switzerland
Greece	Tanzania
Guernsey	Togo
Guinea	Tunisia
Guinea-Bissau	Türkiye
Hong Kong SAR	Uganda
China	United Arab Emirates
India	United Kingdom
Israel	United States
Italy	

A reach across six continents



Regional split

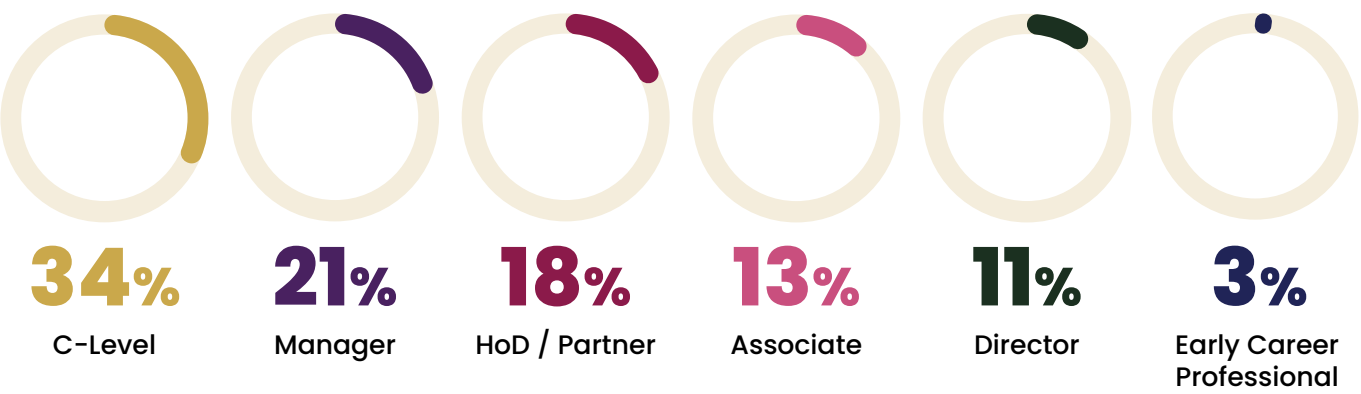


Top 9 countries

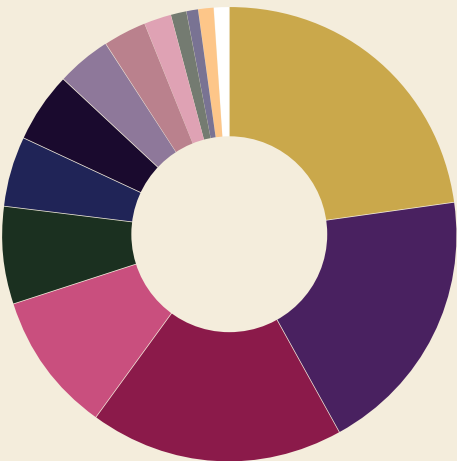
1. South Africa
2. United Kingdom
3. Kenya
4. France
5. United Arab Emirates
6. United States
7. Zambia
8. China
9. Nigeria

Audience Highlights

Attendee Breakdown by Job Role



Audience Breakdown by Industry Sectors



Financial Institutions.....	23%
Professional Services.....	19%
Developers.....	18%
Technology Provider.....	10%
Ministry.....	7%
Engineering, Procurement, Construction (EPC).....	5%
State Owned Enterprises (SOE, Utility, etc).....	5%
Associations / NGO / Research.....	4%
Press / Media.....	3%
Regulators.....	2%
Oil and Gas.....	1%
Large Scale Energy Users.....	1%
Gas.....	1%
SME/Entrepreneurs.....	1%

Top 5 Job Functions



General Management.....	21%
Business Development.....	18%
Technical / Engineering....	17%
Finance.....	11%
Legal.....	8%



YES! Audience Highlights

Audience in Numbers



The Youth Energy Summit was a truly inspiring experience. The atmosphere was exciting and welcoming, and I had the chance to connect with many incredible young people across the sector. YES! showed me the power of youth voices in shaping energy solutions, and I left feeling inspired to contribute and drive impact in my own community. It was fun, exciting, and full of energy. YES! didn't just teach me but it inspired me. I left feeling motivated, connected, and excited to be part of the change.

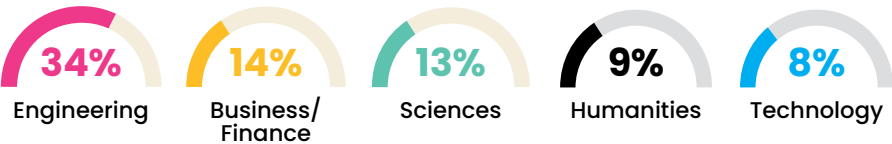
Sanelisiwe Mdokwe, University of Western Cape

Countries Represented at YES!

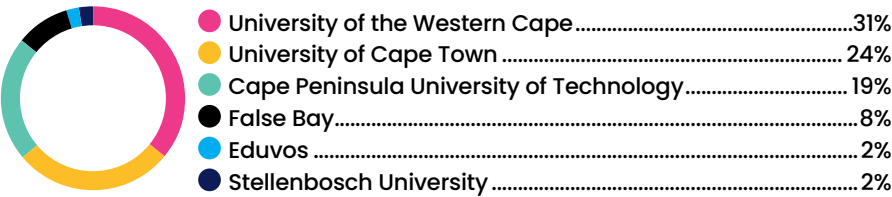
Top 5 Countries



Top 5 Subjects

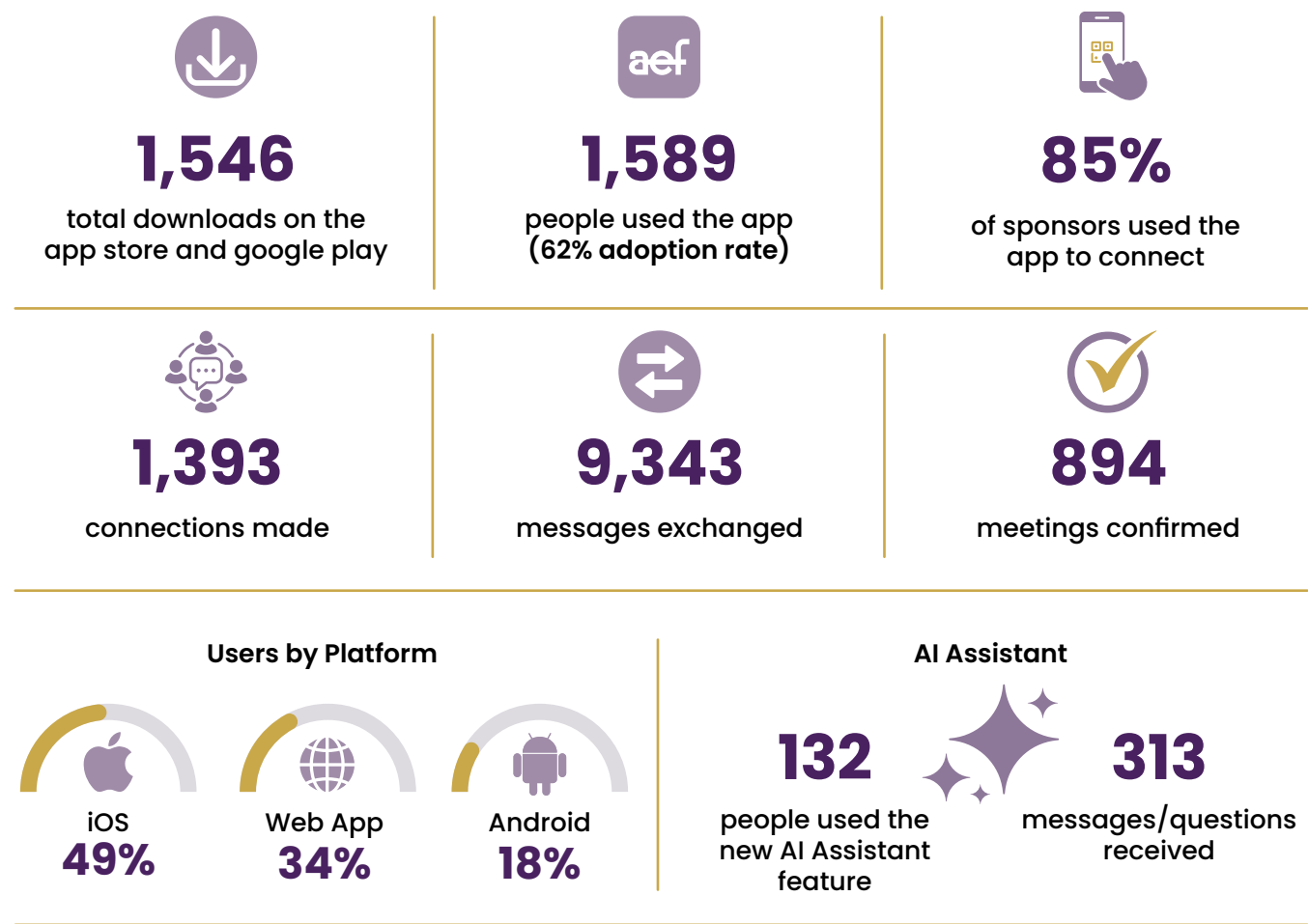


Top Universities in Attendance



Networking App Highlights

The aef26 networking app reached



aef Networking App
Sponsored by



4,191 The total number of ATP push notifications delivered

699
people reached

204
click-throughs to ATP's profile



In addition **MISSION 300 Accelerator**
#PoweringAfrica

4,300 M300 push notifications

716
the average number of people receiving the messages

182
click-throughs to M300 sessions in the app

Inside the Exhibition

The Creative Vision Behind aef 2026



Ubangi River Lounge – Powered by ENGIE



Inspired by the Ubangi River and the Congo Basin, the networking lounge brought one of Africa’s most biodiverse landscapes to life. The space encouraged delegates to meet, relax and connect in an environment that reflected the continent’s rich natural heritage and culture.

Fynbos Passage

Inspired by transformation, arrival and the Cape Floral Kingdom, the Fynbos Passage created a dramatic transition from the outside world into the heart of aef 2026. Designed as an immersive arrival experience, the feature built anticipation and welcomed delegates into the event through theatrical lighting, movement and storytelling, setting the tone for the journey ahead.



Africa Pavilion

Inspired by the Cape Winelands, the Africa Pavilion provided an elegant setting for meetings, networking and hospitality. Rooted in South Africa’s heritage, it created a welcoming space where business conversations and partnerships could flourish.



Pre-Session Meeting Rooms

Inspired by Botswana’s diamond mines, the speaker preparation rooms offered a premium retreat before taking to the stage. The design reflected the value of Africa’s natural resources while creating a calm, inspiring environment for speakers and panellists.

Registration – Fynbos

Inspired by the Cape Floral Kingdom, the registration experience welcomed delegates with an immersive arrival that celebrated South Africa’s natural beauty. Designed to create a memorable first impression, it transformed the traditional check-in into a vibrant gateway to aef 2026.

Inside the Exhibition

The Creative Vision Behind aef 2026



Meeting Pods

Inspired by African hot air balloon safaris, the Meeting Pods provided intimate spaces for one-to-one meetings and meaningful conversations. Their distinctive design encouraged collaboration while offering delegates a unique networking experience.



Media Lounge – Powered by ENN

ENN
Energy News Network

Inspired by the energy of modern media, the Media Lounge served as the hub for interviews, podcasts and live content creation. Designed to support journalists, press and partners, it showcased the conversations and stories driving Africa's energy sector.

Networking Villages

Inspired by the diversity of Africa's regions, the Southern, West, East and North Africa Networking Villages celebrated the cultures, flavours and identities that make the continent unique. Each village was designed to reflect the character of its region through authentic cuisine, hospitality and distinctive design, creating welcoming spaces for delegates to meet, network and build new connections. More than networking destinations, the villages brought the spirit of Africa to the exhibition floor, encouraging conversations in environments that were both immersive and rooted in regional identity.



Serengeti Restaurant

Inspired by the Serengeti from sunrise to sunset, the restaurant celebrated the beauty of the African landscape through immersive dining spaces. It offered delegates a relaxed environment to connect while experiencing the changing atmosphere of the savannah throughout the day.

ZIMBABWE ZAMBIA

3RD ANNUAL ZIMBABWE-ZAMBIA ENERGY PROJECTS SUMMIT

3-5 NOVEMBER 2026

RADISSON BLU MOSI-OA-TUNYA, LIVINGSTONE, ZAMBIA



**Celebrating How Zambia and Zimbabwe Have Unlocked FDI
Through Connectivity, Credibility and Cooperation**



FIND OUT MORE

For more information on how to get involved, please contact
Abdoulaye@EnergyNet.co.uk

Stealing the Show

The exhibition has always been at the heart of aef, but this year it reached another level. Sponsors and exhibitors delivered their most ambitious stands yet, creating beautifully designed spaces that drew delegates in, encouraged meaningful conversations and elevated the experience across the exhibition floor.



Inside the Agenda

Agenda at a Glance

- Opening Ceremony
- Closed Door
- Ministerial Town Hall
- Africa for Africa
- Transmission and Baseload
- Decentralised Energy and Access
- Critical Minerals as a Catalyst for Industrialisation
- Hosted Boardroom
- Large Scale Economies
- Energy Financing and Trading
- Technology
- M300 Progress and Cohort Three Country Compact
- Youth Energy Summit (YES!)
- Networking Events

DAY ONE: TUESDAY 16 JUNE 2026

Registration & Networking
Opening Ceremony
Africa Energy Forum: EnergyNet Remarks – ‘Building Africa’s Industrialised Future’: Simon Gosling , MD, EnergyNet
Forum Sponsor Welcome Address: Goran Rajsic , Founder & Chairman, Sun Africa 
High Level Address: Damilola Ogunbiyi , Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, CEO for Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL) & Co-Chair of UN-Energy
High Level Address: H.E. Honourable Dr El Hadji Abdourahmane Diouf , Minister of Energy & Petroleum, Senegal
High Level Keynote Address: H.E. Honourable Dr. Kgosientsho Ramokgopa , Minister of Electricity & Energy, South Africa
Leadership Awards: Lifetime Achievement Award: H.E. Honourable Dr. Kgosientsho Ramokgopa , Minister of Electricity & Energy, South Africa Breaking Barriers Award: Chris Flavin , CEO, Gridworks
M300 Update: Andrew Herscowitz , CEO, Mission 300 Accelerator, RF Catalytic Capital
Spotlight on South Africa – Investments, Partnerships and Opportunities Session Sponsor 
Networking Lunch
Closed Door Ministerial Lunch
Ministerial Town Hall – Regional Production Hubs to Drive Industrialisation
Closed Door Leadership Roundtable
Opening Drinks Reception Celebrating Africa’s Rich History and Culture Hosted by 

Inside the Agenda

Agenda at a Glance

DAY TWO: WEDNESDAY 17 JUNE 2026

Registration & Networking

Closed Door DFI & SWF Roundtable Reforming Energy Financial Infrastructure for Industrial Growth – What’s Needed to Succeed?

Africa for Africa	Transmission and Baseload	Decentralised Energy and Access	Critical Minerals as a Catalyst for Industrialisation	Hosted Boardroom
Session Sponsor:  What Does a ‘Just’ Energy Transition Mean for Africa?	Large Scale Transmission and Distribution Projects	Session Sponsor:  What Role Does DRE Play in Achieving Africa’s Energy Access Objectives?	Rising Global Demand for Critical Minerals: Africa’s Opportunity	Hosted By:  Closing the Risk Gap: Pragmatic Financial Solutions for Bankable IPPs

Closed Door South Africa Industrialisation Roundtable

Africa for Africa	Transmission and Baseload	Decentralised Energy and Access	Critical Minerals as a Catalyst for Industrialisation	Hosted Boardroom
Session Sponsor:  South Africa – Grid Resilience and Expansion	Session Sponsor:  Solar – Africa’s Shining Star	Prospects for Data Centres in Africa’s Energy Ecosystem	Building Large-Scale Pit-to-Port Infrastructure	Hosted By:  Financing Africa’s Gas Infrastructure Deficit

Hosted Boardroom
 Clean Cooking: Driving Awareness and Implementation at Scale.

Hosted by:
 
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Inside the Agenda

Agenda at a Glance

DAY TWO: WEDNESDAY 17 JUNE 2026

Africa for Africa	Transmission and Baseload	Decentralised Energy and Access	Critical Minerals as a Catalyst for Industrialisation	Hosted Boardroom
Innovation South Africa	Session Sponsor:  BESS: Enhancing Grid Stability and Decreasing Costs	How M300 Compacts Are Channelling FDI into Energy Access and Clean Cooking	Financing Infrastructure Projects Behind Critical Minerals	Hosted By:  Unlocking Africa's Grid Investment: The Independent Transmission Opportunity

Hosted Boardroom
 SAREM Now: Procurement Reform, Trade Policy Review and New Approaches to Bid Windows. **Hosted by:**


Africa for Africa	Transmission and Baseload	Decentralised Energy and Access	Critical Minerals as a Catalyst for Industrialisation
SWFs and Pension Funds Potential to Close Africa's Energy Gap	How Wind Energy is Powering the Energy Transition	The Captive and Embedded Power Trilemma: Reliability, Cost, and Bankability	Powering Africa's Mineral Gateways: Rail, Ports, and Digital Corridors

Hosted Boardroom
 Making Projects Bankable and Unlocking Transmission at Scale – A Risk Advisors View...
Hosted By: 

Closed Door Utilities Roundtable
 Reforming Utilities Holistically for Industrial Growth – What's Needed to Succeed?

Hosted Boardroom
Hosted By: 
 Batoka Gorge Hydro-Electric Scheme: Market Sounding for Developers, Investors and Lenders



Inside the Agenda

Agenda at a Glance

DAY THREE: THURSDAY 18 JUNE 2026

Registration & Networking			
M300 Progress and Cohort Three Country Compact			
  			
M300 Day Opening Remarks What is M300?			
Host Country Welcome Address			
Plenary Session – M300 Stocktake			
M300 Energy Compact Deep Dive – Gabon, Central African Republic, Djibouti, Rwanda, Uganda, Burkina Faso			
Large Scale Economies	Energy Financing and Trading	Critical Minerals as a Catalyst for Industrialisation	Hosted Boardroom
Southern Africa – Fireside Chats on the Latest Trends in the Region	Offtake Structures in a Liberalising Market	Session Sponsor:  Mining as a Catalyst for Energy Security	Hosted By:  Beyond Generation: Technology as the Next Investment Opportunity in Southern Africa's New Energy System
West Africa – Fireside Chats on the Latest Trends in the Region	Session Sponsor:  Africa's Power Pools' Growing Influence on Regional Integration and Energy Security	Critical Minerals to Accelerate Renewable Energy Projects	Hosted By:  Bridge Power Nuclear – Gas-to-SMR for Fast-Track Affordable African Baseload
East Africa – Fireside Chats on the Latest Trends in the Region	Scaling Power Markets Through Secondary Asset Markets	Session Sponsor:  Powering Downstream Mining Capacity in Africa	Hosted by: UNEP Unlocking Investment in Clean Captive Energy for C&I Sectors in Sub-Saharan Africa

I sincerely appreciated the interactive and intimate format of the session leadership and regulatory roundtable, which created the right environment for open and meaningful dialogue on the key energy challenges and opportunities across regulatory bodies in Africa. It was a valuable experience. I look forward to staying connected.

Salifu Bah, Director, Finance, Petroleum Commission, The Gambia

Inside the Agenda

Agenda at a Glance

DAY THREE: THURSDAY 18 JUNE 2026

Large Scale Economies	Closed Door Roundtable	Hosted Boardroom
MENA – Fireside Chats on the Latest Trends in the Region	Closed-Door High-Level Roundtable on Critical Minerals	Hosted By:  Powering Regional Integration: Energy Security, Infrastructure and Trade Integration Across Africa
Closed Door Regulators Roundtable Reforming Energy Regulatory Structures for Industrial Growth – What’s Needed to Succeed?		



Thank you for the opportunity to participate in aef 2026. It was a very well-run forum, with strong engagement and valuable discussions around the role of capital as well as secondary asset markets in our session. I appreciated the opportunity to contribute to the session and connect with the broader industry.”

Ziyaad Sarang, Chief Investment Officer, Revego Fund Managers

Inside the Agenda

Agenda at a Glance

Youth Energy Summit (YES!) Powered By:
 

DAY FOUR: FRIDAY 19 JUNE 2026

YES! Registration & Networking

aef Registration & Networking

YES! Opening Ceremony

- EnergyNet YES! Welcome Remarks
- Walk With Me Programme: Why YES!? Hear success stories from YES! Alumni and be blown away!
- Host Country Keynote Address



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- Scaling Youth Entrepreneurship Opportunities
- YES! Networking Coffee

Hosted Boardroom	Transmission and Baseload	Energy Financing and Trading
Hosted by:   Powering Regional Integration in Southern Africa: Long-Term Planning, Market Evolution and Investment Pathways in the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP)	How Has Recent Geopolitics Impacted International Attitudes to Gas?	Session Sponsor:  Energy Trading – Transforming Africa's Energy Market



Inside the Agenda

Agenda at a Glance

DAY FOUR: FRIDAY 19 JUNE 2026

Youth Energy Summit (YES!)		Youth Energy Summit (YES!)	
Interactive Workshop Hosted by:  What It Takes to Get a Winning Business Off the Ground		Interactive Workshop Hosted by:  Decentralised Energy: Building Your Business Leadership and Powering Community Transformation	
Interactive Workshop: Hosted by Harambee Youth Employment Accelerator  Pathways to Success: What Skills and Knowledge do I Need to Seize Jobs and Entrepreneurship Opportunities?		Ask the Minister Q&A: H.E. Honourable Samantha Graham-Maré, Deputy Minister of Electricity & Energy, South Africa 	
		Interactive Workshop: Hosted by IPP Office, South Africa  Driving Inclusive Growth: Youth Pathways in South Africa's Energy Sector	
Technology	Transmission and Baseload	Energy Financing and Trading	
Realising AI to Achieve Revenue, Grid Resilience and Energy Access	Harnessing Hydropower to Meet Energy Demand	Session Sponsor:  'Risk Gap'	

aef 2026 Farewell Lunch

YES! Networking Lunch



Making Headlines

NEWS DIGEST

Projects and Signings



MCB x AXIAN Energy: a \$60 million facility

AXIAN Energy secured a US\$60 million financing facility from the Mauritius Commercial Bank, signed on the floor with AXIAN's Frederic Sismondi and MCB's Mathieu Delteil, to extend the group's renewable build-out.

Why it matters.

Most financing of this size for a pan-African developer has come from development finance institutions rather than commercial banks. MCB is a Mauritian bank lending its own money, which is the kind of home-grown capital the sector has been trying to attract for years.



Mission 300 passes 50 million, and six countries sign on

At the forum's opening, the World Bank and the African Development Bank marked 50 million people connected to electricity under Mission 300, at nearly double the pace the programme began with. Six countries added national energy compacts during the week, Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, Djibouti, Gabon, Rwanda and Uganda, on the way to a target of 300 million by 2030.

Why it matters.

The compacts are what turn a headline figure into a delivery plan. Each commits a government to specific reforms of its utility, its generation mix and its rules for private capital, the groundwork that decides whether pledged money becomes connections. Six new signatures in one week is momentum the programme can build on.

It was an informative and exciting experience for us. We are grateful for having been part of the forum.”

Grace Kavei, Ministry of Information & Communications Technology, Namibia

Making Headlines

NEWS DIGEST Projects and Signings

It was a great privilege to participate in the Africa Energy Forum 2026. The event was exceptionally well organized and provided an excellent platform for meaningful discussions, knowledge sharing, and building valuable partnerships across Africa's energy sector.

I particularly appreciated the opportunity to connect with industry leaders and innovators who share the vision of building Africa's industrialized future.

Thank you once again, and I look forward to participating in future editions of the Forum.”

Prof. Askwar H. Hilonga,
Executive Secretary,
Energy Regulators Association of East Africa (EREA)

Infinity Power x AIKO Solar

As signing covering the NeferMinya Solar PV project in Egypt at 1.2 GWp, alongside a Global Strategic Partner Agreement between the two companies.

Why it matters.

A gigawatt-scale project paired with a strategic partnership points to a pipeline relationship, not a one-off, the kind of repeat commitment that builds a market.

Zafiri launches with \$176 million

The blended-finance vehicle managed by Inspired Evolution launched with \$176 million of patient equity for the companies serving communities beyond the grid, at least half earmarked for mini-grids, solar home systems and clean cooking, with a target of reaching more than 10 million people by 2030.

Why it matters.

Patient equity is the piece the off-grid sector has most lacked. A fund built to hold its stake for years, rather than seek a quick exit, backs companies to scale and reach households that shorter-term money never could. That clean cooking is named alongside mini-grids and solar marks it moving into the mainstream financing conversation.



Infinity Power x PowerChina Guizhou

An EPC Letter of Award was signed for the Ngwedi Cluster Solar PV project in South Africa, at 488 MWp.

Why it matters.

Utility-scale solar of this size adds meaningful firm capacity to a grid working hard to keep pace with demand.

Making Headlines

NEWS DIGEST Projects and Signings



Revego x H1 Capital

Revego Fund Managers and H1 Capital announced the merger of their portfolios at the forum, presented by Revego’s chief investment officer Ziyaad Sarang.

Why it matters.
Consolidation among specialist funds concentrates the expertise and balance sheet needed to recycle capital into new build, a theme Revego pressed throughout the week.

AMDA and GOGLA join forces

The Africa Minigrid Developers Association and GOGLA announced a collaboration to accelerate energy access across the continent, shared with the sector through the ENN newsletter during the forum.

Why it matters.
When the two bodies representing mini-grid developers and the off-grid solar industry align, it pulls a fragmented sector toward common standards and a shared voice with funders and governments.

Copperbelt solar, financed at home

On the Zambian Copperbelt, 136MW of new solar reached the grid in fourteen months through the Itimpi II project, financed on local capital markets without a sovereign guarantee.

Why it matters.
Built on local markets with no government guarantee, this is a bankability model many African projects have struggled to reach. It is early proof that domestic capital can carry more of the load, and quickly.

South Africa’s grid: 1,164km built

South Africa’s IPP Office set out the 1,164km of new transmission already delivered under the first phase of its programme.

Why it matters.
Generation has outpaced the wires to carry it across much of the continent. A country reporting real transmission kilometres built, not merely planned, is the exception, and the precondition for everything else connecting.



Making Headlines

NEWS DIGEST Projects and Signings

Seriti Green’s wind build advances

Seriti Green progressed what it describes as South Africa’s largest wind project, under construction in Mpumalanga’s coal heartland.

Why it matters.
Siting the country’s largest wind build in its coal region, and retraining the workforce to run it, is the just transition made concrete rather than promised.



Awards at the opening ceremony

Gridworks, led by chief executive Chris Flavin, received the Breaking Barriers award, and South Africa’s Minister of Electricity and Energy, Kgosientsho Ramokgopa, received the life-time achievement award.

Why it matters.
The forum’s honours point to where it sees leadership, in opening hard markets and in sustained public stewardship of the sector.

Batoka Gorge opens to development partners

The Zambezi River Authority used the forum to invite credible development partners into the Batoka Gorge Hydro-Electric Scheme, with chief executive Munyaradzi Munodawafa framing the search as the project’s crucial stage.

Why it matters.
A long-planned scheme on a river Zambia and Zimbabwe share moved from ambition to open procurement. It also sets up ENN’s own coverage ahead of the Zimbabwe–Zambia Energy Projects Summit in Livingstone this November.



aef 2026 was an excellent opportunity to network with industry leaders, gain valuable insights, and contribute to conversations shaping Africa’s energy future. The quality of the discussions and the networking was exceptional. I look forward to attending future editions.”

Allegria Ntumba, Director, Autorite de Regulation du Secteur de L’electricite (ARE), DRC

INSIDE THE ENERGY AGENDA

Africa Energy Forum opens for business with call to turn vision into industry

Africa Energy Forum 2026 opened in Cape Town with a clear message to delegates: the continent has the vision for an industrialised future, and now needs the infrastructure, investment and political will to deliver it.



South Africa's Minister of Electricity and Energy, His Excellency Dr Kgosientsho Ramokgopa, set the tone with a keynote address delivered on South Africa's Youth Day, linking the country's history of struggle to the energy challenges facing the continent today.

"Development delayed is dignity denied," he told delegates, arguing that Africa's youngest-in-the-world population and vast natural resources, including critical minerals, must be matched by stronger local ownership of energy value chains.

He also called for momentum behind the Africa Single Electricity Market, stressing that generation alone will not be enough without transmission infrastructure and functioning power

pools. "We must move from aspiration to project pipelines, and from project pipelines to implementation," he said, adding that Africa was "not asking the world to finance dependency... but to invest in the greatest growth opportunity of the 21st century."

Senegal's newly appointed Minister of Energy and Petroleum, H.E. Honourable Dr El Hadji Abdourahmane Diouf, echoed the call for regional integration and pointed to progress made by the West African Power Pool. "Our continent for so long has been defined as a continent of potential," he said. "Today, we must turn Africa into a continent of growth... the transition must leave no African nation behind."

Also speaking at the Opening Ceremony was Damilola Ogunbiyi, of Sustainable Energy for All and UN-Energy, who framed the theme of an industrialised future as one of the era's defining development imperatives.

Meanwhile, Mission 300 Accelerator chief Andrew Herscowitz updated delegates on the initiative's progress, noting more than 50 million people had now been connected to electricity through the programme. Thirty country compacts are already in operation, with six more due to launch this week.

Sun Africa's founder and chairman, Goran Rajsic, returning as forum sponsor, delivered one of the ceremony's most pointed interventions. "The sun falls on every square metre of Africa... and does not issue an invoice," he said, citing that Africa needs at least \$15-30 billion a year in investment against the roughly \$3 billion currently flowing into the sector. "Let us stop conferencing and start building now."



Two leadership awards were presented during the ceremony, including a Lifetime Achievement Award to Minister Ramokgopa.

Opening Ceremony: Leadership Awards

Amid the welcoming remarks, a moment was dedicated to recognising organisations and individuals driving Africa's just energy transition and industrial future forward.

Lifetime Achievement Award

Winner: H.E. Honourable Dr. Kgosientsho Ramokgopa, Minister of Electricity & Energy, South Africa

Recognised for his leadership in stabilising South Africa's energy sector, H.E. Honourable Dr. Kgosientsho Ramokgopa was praised for his role in helping to guide the country from energy instability to a milestone full year without load shedding. His Excellency was commended for "restoring confidence and hope for the next generation," with improvements in the country's energy reliability under his leadership having measurably improved social and economic indicators nationwide – from credit ratings and GDP forecasts to employment opportunities, education and healthcare. In accepting the award, His Excellency paid tribute to Eskom's 32,000-strong team and emphasised the importance of collective effort.

These awards mark the beginning of several success stories to be showcased throughout aef 2026, culminating in the Youth Energy Summit that will shine a spotlight on more than 600 future energy leaders in what is a milestone South African Youth Month, marking the 50th anniversary of the 1976 Soweto Uprising.

H.E. Honourable Dr. Kgosientsho Ramokgopa, Minister of Electricity & Energy, South Africa: "I'd like to thank the 32,000 men and women at Eskom who have made this possible. And as we pivot to Eskom 2.0, we will continue to build on those foundations laid by those who have come before us."



Breaking Barriers Award

Winner: Gridworks

Gridworks was acknowledged for the pivotal role it has played in advancing transmission and distribution infrastructure across Africa. As the backbone of connectivity for communities and industry, transmission is critical to unlocking the continent's economic growth and full potential, with Gridworks proactively bridging the transmission gap by championing private sector participation. The company has facilitated more than \$300 million in private capital investment in developments such as the Amari Power Transmission Project in Uganda, enabling patient capital, innovation and scalability to come together. In accepting the award, CEO Chris Flavin paid tribute to partnerships with those governments and utilities working with Gridworks to turn their project visions into realities.

Chris Flavin, CEO, Gridworks: "It's a tremendous honour to receive this award on behalf of the whole Gridworks team. My biggest thank you is for the governments and public utilities who have partnered with us as an execution and financing partner to turn their visions into real infrastructure projects." 🚩



INSIDE THE ENERGY AGENDA

South African Energy 2.0: Diversification, Transformation and Electrification

South Africa's energy sector has entered a new phase, with policymakers, financiers and industry leaders pointing to renewed momentum behind the country's industrial and energy ambitions.



Phindile Masangane, Group Executive: Programmes at DBSA, said she is “on the edge of her seat” envisaging the potential the continent has when it comes to its industrialised future, and the leading role South Africa can play in Africa's energy transformation after turning a significant corner over the past 12 months.

The launch of the South African Renewable Energy Masterplan (SAREM), which directly targets localisation, electrification and employment, has accelerated optimism across the broader energy ecosystem.

Rebuilding and Remodelling the Power Sector

A shift in thinking is reflected in the concept of “Eskom 2.0”, with Eskom CEO Dan Marokane saying the utility is “rebuilding and remodelling itself to play a big role” in South Africa's evolving energy landscape.

“We know what the country is capable of,” he said. “We now need to make electricity firstly available and then affordable – if we can get those two elements right, then we can stimulate industrialisation and economic growth.”

That future is centred on a more diverse energy mix, greater collaboration and continued investment.

“Having come out the other side of what we have experienced in terms of loadshedding, we need a strong energy mix moving forward and can't just be reliant on one source to remain stable,” said H.E. Honourable Samantha Graham-Marè, Deputy Minister of Electricity & Energy, South Africa. “Nuclear, for example, is functional, stable and a big part of that renewable



energy transition if you think about the need for a more secure baseload.”

New Generation Opportunities

South Africa’s gas-to-power programme is also advancing, creating new opportunities for developers and investors as the country expands its generation mix. At the same time, the programme highlights longer-term delivery challenges, particularly around securing long-lead equipment such as gas turbines, with global supply chain constraints continuing to affect project timelines.

Regardless of generation technology, transmission remains the country’s defining infrastructure challenge. South Africa’s Transmission Development Plan targets the construction of 14,500km of transmission lines and the unlocking of 56GW of new capacity by 2034.

“We’ve already made significant progress through the first phase of the project, with 1,164km and associated infrastructure constructed to expand grid capacity and unlock new generation opportunities,” said Precious Edward, Head of the IPP Office, South Africa.

A Positive Outlook

The transmission programme is expected to unlock a further 3,200MW of generation capacity, primarily from renewable

energy, supported by seven transmission projects that have already been approved across key regions of the country.

“It’s nice to come here with a positive outlook,” said Amith Singh, Head of Power & Renewables Finance at Nedbank CIB, speaking on the opening day of the Africa Energy Forum in Cape Town. “Every year I would come here and it seemed as though South Africa’s reputation was going further down.

“Today, I’m very happy to be talking about South Africa as a role model once more, showing how we can transform and bring electricity to the whole continent.” ■



INSIDE THE ENERGY AGENDA

Six new Mission 300 Compacts unveiled at Africa Energy Forum

The next cohort of Mission 300 compacts was unveiled at Africa Energy Forum 2026, with six countries (Gabon, the Central African Republic, Djibouti, Rwanda, Uganda and Burkina Faso) setting out detailed national plans to expand electricity access and clean cooking.

Mission 300 is the World Bank and African Development Bank-backed initiative aiming to connect 300 million Africans to electricity by 2030, with each National Compact representing a government-owned roadmap of targets, reforms and investment priorities designed to draw in private capital. Here's what each of the six new compacts entails.

Gabon: Targets over 95% national electricity access by 2030, up from 92%, and 99% clean cooking access, up from 91%. Will require an estimated \$4.2 billion in investment, including 1,000km of new transmission lines to unify the country's five isolated regional grids.





Central African Republic: Targets a rise in electricity access from 17.8% to 50% by 2030, with clean cooking access rising from 19% to 30%. Carries a \$1.75 billion financing requirement, with 30% targeted from private capital.

Djibouti: Targets 100% electricity access and a fully renewable grid by 2035, up from 70.6% access and 87% renewables today. Tariffs are set to fall from \$0.28 to \$0.22 per kWh. The compact requires \$1.327 billion in funding.

Rwanda: Targets universal electricity access by 2030 and a sevenfold increase in clean cooking penetration, from 5.6% to 31%. Generation capacity will nearly double to 1,032MW. The

plan carries a \$3.05 billion investment imperative, with private capital expected to grow tenfold.

Uganda: Targets 85% electricity access by 2030, up from 62%, bringing power to 13 million more people. \$17.7 billion investment is requirement, the largest of the six, with \$8.9 billion expected from private capital.

Burkina Faso: Targets 100% urban and 70.73% rural electricity access by 2030, up from 87.8% and 10.2% respectively, while aiming to eliminate energy import dependence entirely. Private sector participation is targeted to grow from \$338 million to \$5.7 billion. ■





INSIDE THE ENERGY AGENDA

Africa's \$8.6 trillion minerals opportunity requires strategy as much as supply

One of the defining themes of aef 2026 examined one of Africa's biggest economic opportunities: rising global demand for critical minerals and what it means for the continent's long-term industrial future.

Home to around 30% of global mineral reserves, Africa is well positioned to benefit from growing demand. Opening the discussion, Rita Madeira, Africa Programme Manager at the International Energy Agency (IEA), said demand for critical minerals is

expected to triple by 2040 under a scenario reflecting national climate pledges. Yet while African countries play an important role in mining, they account for less than 1% of the value created during manufacturing.



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"Today, the continent exports a vast majority of its mineral resources unprocessed, with a few exceptions," Madeira said. "Sustainably scaling up local beneficiation could increase the market value from \$69 billion in 2024 to \$120 billion by 2040."

Moderated by Gracelin Baskaran of CSIS, the discussion quickly moved beyond geology to strategy. Speakers argued that resource wealth alone will not deliver economic transformation. Instead, governments must develop policies that connect extraction with manufacturing, industrialisation and job creation.

"The UN says that by 2030, Africa will have the youngest population," said Mandisa Mabaso, Head of Government Relations, Southern Africa, Rio Tinto. "Let's upskill our young people so they can then take this process forward. If we fail to do that, then we will have failed the continent."

From a financing and infrastructure perspective, Mpho Mokwele of the Development Bank of Southern Africa highlighted more than \$8.6 trillion in undeveloped African mineral deposits, while noting that limited exploration funding and enabling infrastructure continue to constrain progress.

"Only about 10% of exploration spend globally is allocated on the African continent," Mokwele said. "So, we need to then unlock access to additional exploration funding."

Sierra Leone's Minister of Mines & Mineral Resources, Julius Mattai, called for a broader view of critical minerals.

"We should no longer look at critical minerals as a commodity," he said. "Critical minerals sit at the intersection of energy security, industrialisation policy, geopolitics, strategic infrastructure, and the equitable distribution of opportunities." Without that broader perspective, he warned, resource extraction risks reinforcing existing inequalities rather than resolving them.

The discussion concluded with a clear message: Africa's critical minerals opportunity is significant, but capturing its full value will depend on stronger policy frameworks, local supply chains and greater beneficiation of the continent's mineral resources. ■



INSIDE THE ENERGY AGENDA

Say Yes to YES!

YES! 2026 got off to an inspiring start in Cape Town, as delegates looked both back and forward to better understand the direction of Africa's energy sector.

The opening session paused to mark the 50th anniversary of the Soweto uprising, recognising how that defining moment helped pave the way for a country now looking ahead with renewed confidence in its energy future.

"We want to show how great the energy sector is and how great South Africa is. We're all here standing on the shoulders of giants," said Simon Gosling, Managing Director, EnergyNet, addressing the young audience. *"You're invited here to continue the legacy. Keep talking about where you've come from and where you're going. You are the future."*

One of those continuing that legacy was Thuso Xola Quali, YES! Ambassador & Alumni, South Africa, now with Pele Green. Once

part of the YES! audience himself, he joined fellow entrepreneurs and innovators to share advice with the next generation.

"One of the best things you can do for yourself is connect with people," he said. *"Take every opportunity to connect and make sure people remember you when you step out of the room. Talk to people. Be annoying."*

Networking emerged as a consistent theme throughout the opening session.

"I encourage you all to utilise the opportunity in front of you. Network and grab opportunities with both hands. You never know what a conversation can lead to," said Vincent Mosebe, Founder & CEO, Mosebe Enterprise, South Africa.





Emmanuel Terwase, Co-Founder and CEO, Boost Power, Nigeria, reflected on his own YES! journey: *"Connect, learn and grow. I connected with amazing people who are now critical partners. I learned about new advancements across solar, batteries and electric vehicles. And then I took action. I said YES in 2023 to be part of the solution and contribute my quota. I now invite you to say YES!"*

"I was sat here 12 months ago, taking notes, meeting people, and wondering where I fit in the energy sector. I was just someone with curiosity and a desire to learn. Now I'm helping to power the future," added Amukelani Nkhi, Co-Founder, Waste-to-Watt Innovations, South Africa.

The opening concluded with a keynote address from H.E. Honourable Samantha Graham-Maré, Deputy Minister of Electricity & Energy, South Africa, who said the country has "no shortage of talent" and reaffirmed the government's commitment to placing young people at the centre of its vision.

Perhaps the strongest message came from Mercy Kyalo, Founder of Feion Green Ventures, a women- and youth-led business addressing clean cooking across five countries.

"At this point in time, there are those who still don't believe young people can run companies that make sense and make a lot of impact. I believe in young people!" ■



In the Media



Ahead of the Forum

Overall Pan-African media coverage



217.00+ K

impressions



13,847

views



1,053

news/articles

Overall Gulf countries coverage



8,310

impressions



6,960

views



128

news/articles

Overall Western Europe coverage



135.98 M

impressions



613

views



66

news/articles

Onsite Media Impact



71

press attendees



10

media partners



108

stories



80+

interviews

Media Partners



Media houses were spread out to represent various countries, including:



South Africa

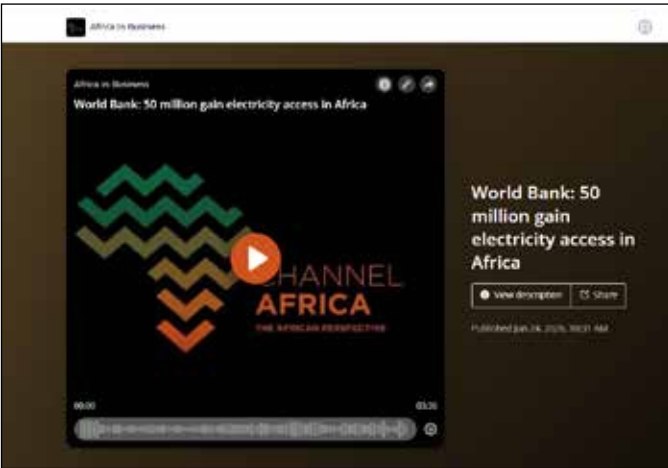
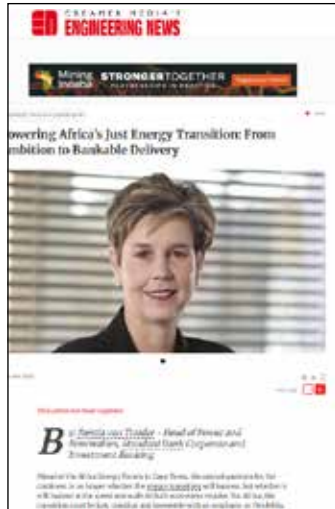
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International media

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In the Media

Coverage Snapshot



In the Media

The Full Story



World Bank's MIGA boosts backing for Africa's energy sector

By Marc Howard, African Energy – 29 June 2026



The World Bank Group (WBG)'s Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) is increasing its backing for African power generation and transmission investments as part of the WBG and African Development Bank (AfDB)'s Mission 300 (M300) initiative, which aims to bring access to 300m people by 2030 (AE 541, 535).

Speaking to African Energy at the Africa Energy Forum, held in Cape Town on 16-19 June, MIGA global industries head Anthony Molle said it is also developing innovative risk guarantee products to encourage private capital to commit to much-needed African infrastructure developments.

These under-development new products could include coverage for business-interrupting events that fall outside of the remit of governments and MIGA's traditional political risk insurance (PRI) offering.

This may, for instance, include a new type of hybrid instrument product to offer liquidity and help projects

tide over interruptions spanning up to three months. Examples for this contingent funding could include a form of coverage for extreme weather events that would serve to derisk new renewable energy (RE) investments that are sensitive to climate events, such as hydroelectric power (HEP) plants. This type of coverage, not offered today by commercial insurers, could serve to encourage greater private commitments to new RE plays.

Such new products would stand alongside MIGA's "tried and tested" political risk insurance (PRI) offering, Molle said, which provides investors traditional 'four point' protection against non-commercial risks such as breach of contract with the government, transfer restriction, expropriation, or war and civil disturbance.

MIGA's longstanding, traditional PRI offering is likely to remain of high importance to equity investors, Molle said, providing assurance to long-term investors that non-commercial events will not unduly impact their projects.

Since the 1980s, MIGA's PRI products have offered investors assurance that their projects will keep ticking over during those short-term periods of macroeconomic difficulty commonly faced by developing countries: for instance, the recent energy crisis, or the preceding years of high inflation that especially impacted much of Africa (AE 540, 518).

A novel form of batch PRI offering could be on the cards, too, Molle said. The WBG's International Finance Corporation (IFC) has a rigorous set of environmental and social (E&S) performance standards that have become the international benchmark for project development – increasingly even for projects that do not avail of WBG finance.



In the Media

MIGA is looking to leverage the ubiquity of IFC E&S adherence, and is developing a ‘portfolio approach’ to avoid duplication of effort. Should, for instance, a RE developer that embeds IFC E&S standards across its projects approach MIGA with a portfolio of 25 small IPPs, these could be offered a batch PRI product.

This would speed up the frequently time consuming and costly process of early-stage project development without any drop in E&S standards. While some external due diligence would still likely be necessary on a “trust but verify” basis, as would downstream checks on, for example, engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) contractors, MIGA’s batch underwriting of entire portfolios could serve to slash project development times and get electrons flowing faster.

Backing Mission 300

MIGA’s remit is to bridge the gap between what commercial insurers are comfortable covering and the risks that private investors are prepared to take when making long-term infrastructure investments in Africa. “We want to build markets”, Molle said, by giving equity investors confidence that they can commit to power and transmission plays where they are most needed.

This means “creating an enabling environment” for new capital flows to support the WBG and AfDB’s M300, which has seen commitments of over \$50bn to date. Molle said that WBG President Ajay Banga had directed its development finance-focused arms – MIGA, the private sector-focused IFC, and the concessional International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)/ International Development Association (IDA) – to work in tandem to advance M300.

This new direction has already seen an increasingly holistic approach from the entire WBG, with the traditionally largely separate constituent parts now working together, with wider strategic goals converging. A good example of this is that a new WBG task force is being created in

Nairobi, bringing together a senior team of MIGA, IBRD/ IDA, and IFC staff to push M300 projects forward.

Pushing megaprojects forward is not easy, but the increasingly holistic WBG offering of equity, grants, and PRI makes it easier: the ‘package deal’ of MIGA, IFC, and IBRD/IDA backing is worth more than the sum of its parts, Molle said, in terms of the confidence it provides private investors to take risk on M300 projects.

Private investor interest in such projects is increasing, most importantly in those African markets that have traditionally struggled to draw in foreign capital. One such example is Burundi, where MIGA is backing the first phase of private utility Weza Power. Developed by Anzana Electric Group and launched in 2023, Weza aims to connect 9m people by expanding the distribution network and making greater use of small HEP plants, displacing expensive and polluting diesel genset generation (AE 541, 490).

MIGA has supported Weza’s “highly innovative” first phase, intending for its guarantees to demonstrate that the private utility concept can operate successfully – with the government then stepping in for latter phases under its public/private-partnership (PPP) structure. In this respect, Molle said, while MIGA’s coverage mechanisms are essential, the perhaps greater role played by the WBG is signalling that projects such as Weza are viable should private investors be incentivised to commit. ■



[Read full story here](#)

In the Media

The Full Story



When Grandma's Willards Battery Met the Future: The Day aef 2026 Handed the Mic to the Youth — and the Roof Nearly Came Off

By Amanda Mvinjelwa, Financial Insight Africa – June 19, 2026

Nobody leaves on the last day of a world-class conference on a low note when EnergyNet is in charge. aef 2026 saved its most electrifying act for last — and it didn't plug in a celebrity. It plugged in the youth. By the time the final gavel fell at the CTICC, something irreversible had happened, and South Africa's next generation of energy leaders had officially entered the building.

Here is what nobody tells you about the last day of a major international conference: it should, by all laws of physics and human stamina, be the day everyone quietly edges towards the airport. Bags half-packed. Business cards stuffed into every pocket. Eyes carrying that glassy, post-three-networking-dinners look that says "I have met more CEOs in five days than in my entire life and I am magnificent but also deeply exhausted." That is the standard script. EnergyNet apparently did not get the memo.



Because the final day of the **Africa Energy Forum 2026** at the Cape Town International Convention Centre was, against all reasonable expectation, the most electrically charged day of the entire week. And I mean that both literally and metaphorically. The deals had been inked. The handshakes had been shaken. The business cards had done their rounds. The investors who turned Cape Town into the world's most productive boardroom had already mentally boarded their flights to Johannesburg, Lagos, Dubai, and beyond. And yet — nobody left. Not early, anyway. Because EnergyNet, bless their beautifully relentless souls, had one more card up their sleeve.

They brought in the youth.
And oh, did the youth arrive.

The YES Programme: When Energy Transition Gets Personal

The **YES Programme** — EnergyNet's flagship youth engagement initiative — is one of those ideas that sounds good on paper and turns out to be extraordinary in practice. The premise is simple and radical in equal measure: take young people from universities and communities across South Africa, drop them into one of the most significant energy conferences on the African continent, and let what happens, happen.

Students from the University of the Western Cape and the University of Cape Town arrived in numbers. They came from townships and suburbs, from engineering faculties and policy studies departments, from places where the

In the Media

The Full Story



idea of rubbing shoulders with global energy investors is not exactly part of the Tuesday morning curriculum. They came hungry – not for the catering, though I will not pretend the catering wasn’t also excellent – but hungry for knowledge, for conversation, for access to the kinds of rooms their parents could only dream about.

And here is what the YES programme understood that so many corporate youth initiatives get spectacularly wrong: these young people were not brought in to sit quietly and look inspired. They were brought in to engage. To ask questions. To challenge assumptions. To bring an energy – the actual, literal kind, and the other kind – that even the most seasoned energy sector veterans in the room admitted they hadn’t felt in a while.

“The intention was never just to give young people a seat in the room. The intention was to make the room better because they were in it.” Simon Gosling, Founder, EnergyNet

Simon Gosling Was Intentional. And It Shows. Let us take a moment to appreciate Simon Gosling, the founder of EnergyNet Ltd., who built the Africa Energy Forum from the ground up into the kind of event that makes Cape Town briefly forget it is not Geneva. Because Simon’s involvement in the YES programme is not a tick-box exercise. It is not a sustainability slide deck footnote. The man is genuinely intentional about what happens when young minds meet sector leaders at scale.

Consider the timing: this final day of aef 2026 fell squarely in the middle of **Youth Month in South Africa**. June. The month the nation stops – or should stop – to reckon with the enormous energy, talent, and potential sitting in schools and universities and communities that are still too often excluded from the conversations that shape their futures. It is not, as Simon would no doubt agree, a coincidence that it landed this way. It is an alignment. A signature. A deliberate act of calendar choreography that said: these two things belong together.



Cape Town had spent the week as the epicentre of African energy deal-making. Investors from across the globe had poured in. Contracts had been signed over espressos and across boardroom tables and beside exhibition stands. And now, on the final day, the city leaned into something more personal. More generational. More lasting than any single contract. ■

[Read full story here](#)

In the Media

The Full Story



South Africa must not miss gas-to-power opportunity – Marokane

By: Mariaan Webb, Engineering News, 17 June 2026



Eskom CEO Dan Marokane – Photo by Creamer Media

South Africa is closer than ever to getting gas-to-power projects off the ground, Eskom CEO Dan Marokane said on Tuesday, arguing that the country has a unique opportunity to use gas to strengthen energy security, support industrial growth and accelerate the expansion of renewable energy.

Speaking at the Africa Energy Forum in Cape Town, he said a combination of policy alignment, infrastructure planning and growing recognition of gas's role in modern electricity systems had created conditions that were more favourable than in previous attempts to establish a gas-to-power industry.

"This is the closest we have ever been to having a perfect opportunity of landing gas-to-power in the country," Marokane said.

"It has been tried many times, and the conditions and the thinking were not ideal. We really have a lot

of things on our side this time, and we dare not lose the moment."

The optimism was echoed by Independent Power Producer Office head Precious Edward, who reported strong investor interest in South Africa's inaugural gas-to-power procurement programme.

Edward said the first procurement round attracted four bids representing 2 813 MW of capacity against a target of 2 000 MW.

The bids were submitted under the first bid window of South Africa's gas-to-power independent power producer programme, which forms part of the country's plans to diversify its electricity mix and introduce flexible generation capacity to complement renewable energy.

Edward said the response was encouraging given the complexity of gas-to-power developments.

"Gas-to-power is not just a simple electricity procurement programme," she said.

Unlike renewable-energy projects, which primarily require generation facilities and grid connections, gas projects require an entire value chain to be developed simultaneously, including fuel supply arrangements, import and storage infrastructure, transportation networks, environmental approvals, grid access and long-term commercial agreements.

"The challenge is ensuring that all of these components progress at a synchronised pace so that the project remains viable and bankable."



In the Media



She added that the programme had highlighted the importance of providing investors with regulatory certainty, predictability and sufficient time to develop robust proposals.

South Africa's Integrated Resource Plan 2025 calls for 6 000 MW of gas-to-power capacity by 2030, with 3 000 MW expected to come from independent power producers (IPPs) and a further 3 000 MW from Eskom.

Alongside the IPP programme, Marokane said Eskom was advancing its own gas-to-power plans and had recently signed a heads of agreement linked to the proposed Richards Bay gas development.

The project is expected to become one of the country's most important gas infrastructure developments and forms part of Eskom's plans to introduce gas-fired generation capacity over the coming decade.

Marokane said gas should not be viewed merely as a backup fuel for renewable energy.

"There were some thoughts earlier on with the development of renewable energy that suggested gas is a backup plan for renewable-energy expansion," he said. "But what is true, based on what we saw in Australia and in Spain, is that gas is the backbone of expansion of renewable energy in terms of penetration in the energy mix."

He argued that gas would play an increasingly important role as South Africa added more renewable-energy capacity to the grid.

While technologies capable of providing long-duration storage and dispatchable capacity continued to evolve, many remained economically challenging at scale. Gas-fired generation could therefore provide the flexible, dispatchable power required to stabilise the grid as variable wind and solar generation expanded.

Eskom currently relies on diesel-fired open-cycle gas turbines during periods of system stress, but Marokane argued that gas offered a significantly cheaper and more sustainable long-term fuel source.

"We do have peakers at the moment running on diesel. They come in very handy when we need to use them, but we need to go into a much cheaper fuel source, and this is where gas comes in," he said.

Marokane also argued that gas-to-power projects could unlock broader industrial and economic opportunities by creating anchor demand for gas infrastructure and supporting manufacturing activity.

"Gas-to-power provides anchor demand to also solve the gas cliff that you're worried about," he said.

South Africa is facing declining supply from the mature gas fields in Mozambique that currently underpin most pipeline imports, increasing the focus on alternative supply arrangements, including liquefied natural gas imports.

Marokane said a gas import and distribution network centred on Richards Bay could support industries in KwaZulu-Natal that rely on gas feedstock while creating the foundation for a broader regional gas economy.

"Mozambique is endowed with gas for centuries," he said. "And so is South Africa in terms of potential resources."

"What we need are policies that are going to enable us to exploit our natural resources."

He argued that Southern Africa's geography and resource base created a significant opportunity to develop a regional gas economy capable of supporting both electricity generation and industrial development.

[Read full story here](#)

Podcast Highlights

Let's Talk Energy Podcast

Can Off-Grid Energy Power Africa's Industrial Future?

Dr. Wale Aboyade, Global Vice President of Public Policy & Government Relations, **Sun King**

03:00 17:02

Is South Africa's Electricity Grid the Biggest Barrier to Renewable Energy Investment?

Freddie Meyer, Chief Financial Officer at **Mulilo**

03:00 17:02

Can Electric Mobility Become Africa's Next Infrastructure Investment Opportunity?

Nikhath Akhtar Zigmund, Senior Investment Advisor and Head of Kenya, **African Infrastructure Investment Managers (AIIM)**

03:00 17:02

Can Africa Build the Workforce to Deliver Its Energy Ambitions?

Zandile Hlatwayo, Strategy & Innovation Director, **Allied Talent Partners (ATP)**

03:00 17:02

From Fragility to Investment Destination: Can Energy Transform the Central African Republic?

H.E. Marc Mandaba, Minister of Economy, Planning and International Cooperation, **Central African Republic**

03:00 17:02

Can Clean Energy Power Africa's Industrial Future?

Samantha Graham-Maré, South Africa's former Deputy Minister of Electricity and Energy

03:00 17:02

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Ambassador John Giordano
US Ambassador to the Republic of Namibia

Alinafe Thupa
Director of Business Development, Allied Talent Partners

Ahmed Mulla
Deputy CEO, Infinity Power

Amukelani Nkhi
Founder, Waste to Watt Innovations

Sean Naude
Account Manager, Sungrow

Don Purka
Lead Investment Officer, M300, IFC

Floris Vermeulen
Head of Unit, Project Finance, EIB

Annabelle Buzingo
Senior Underwriter, ATIDI

Industrialisation is not a resource story, it is a connectivity story. Capital follows trust, and regulatory stability is the single most important investment any frontier market can make.”

H.E. John Giordano, U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Namibia

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