

Guiding question: Additional power generation capacity is needed to increase access to energy in African LDCs. How can it be ensured this additional capacity will mainly utilize renewable energy? What is the role of renewables in COVID-19 recovery plans and how can it help African LDCs to simultaneously increase their climate ambition and accelerate energy transition?

Distinguished Colleagues and Friends, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

- It is an honor to contribute to this important meeting today. I would like to express my appreciation to UNOHRLLS for its continued efforts in moving the Agenda of the Istanbul Programme of Action forward.
- To answer the question, I would highlight the essential need to consider the short-term response with the medium and long-term objectives of the SDGs and the Paris Agreement. This is a message that we have been emphasizing at IRENA from the beginning of the pandemic, and we charted the way forward in our post-COVID recovery report.
- Even before the pandemic, we were not on track towards achieving SDG7. The world's access deficit is still increasingly concentrated in Sub-Saharan Africa, where more than half of the population lacks access. In addition, millions of people only have minimal or unreliable electricity access. Without more urgent



actions, 620 million people globally will still be left without access to electricity in 2030, and 85 percent of them living in sub-Saharan Africa.

- The pandemic could further derail advances made unless we ensure sustainable energy is an integral part of the global response.
- Energy is the key to achieving most of the SDGs and, to achieving the priority areas of the Istanbul Programme of Action. By placing energy transitions at the centre of national recovery plans, African LDCs can pave way for increased socioeconomic resilience that includes reliable energy access, resilient-livelihoods and long-term social security.
- Africa is endowed with renewable energy resources and could meet nearly a quarter of its energy needs from indigenous and clean resources. Renewable energy can be a game-changer in They are cost-competitive, fast to deploy, support energy independence and security, while reducing dependence on imported fuels. They can provide timely access to clean electricity that protects health and the environment.
- And renewables can do so while creating millions of new jobs, stimulating industrial development along the value chains and With over 60% of its population younger than 25, now more than ever, the African youth requires jobs and opportunities. For every 1million US dollars invested in renewable energy, 25 jobs are being created globally. For Africa, our estimation shows that energy transition related investments focused on renewables, efficiency and infrastructure would yield more jobs in the continent than in the rest of the world.
- Overall, renewables can provide a foundation for resilient economies and societies as the effects of climate change