

## Position Statement on the Inclusion of Civil Society Organizations in the AfDB Annual Meetings

The 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Meetings of the African Development Bank (AfDB) was held on May 22-26 2023, in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt. The theme was, *'Mobilizing Private Sector Financing for Climate and Green Growth in Africa'*. The AfDB's Ten Year Strategy (2013-2022) has identified "Light up and power Africa" as a key priority initiative. AfDB President Dr. Akinwumi A. Adesina stated during the Annual Meetings 2023 that Africa, "should have a just and fair energy transition [with] energy access, affordability, and security for Africa".

The Alliance of Civil Society Organizations for Clean Energy Access (ACCESS Coalition), a global coalition of more than 100 organizations dedicated to advancing clean energy access, welcomes AfDB continued investment in the energy sector. During the meeting, the Africa Investment Forum showcased four deals on green and renewable energy worth \$1.475 billion to investors.<sup>1</sup> ACCESS Coalition calls on the AfDB to provide detailed information on how these investments will accelerate progress on a just energy transition, including providing energy access to underserved communities, and how communities and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) will be involved in their design and delivery.

While appreciating the current efforts, there is a need for AfDB to foster a multi-stakeholder, inclusive approach by establishing robust mechanisms for CSOs engagement to strengthen accountability and foster a culture of collaboration. The AfDB can leverage the wealth of knowledge and expertise of CSOs to enrich the bank's policy reforms on energy access interventions. Key areas to address include:

- **Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) should actively involve civil society organizations (CSOs) in decision-making processes such as the AfDB Annual Meetings.** By incorporating the diverse perspectives and expertise of CSOs, MDBs can effectively design and implement effective energy financing instruments. This inclusive approach not only enhances transparency and accountability, but also strengthens the legitimacy of MDBs' decision-making. In line with this, the ACCESS Coalition urges the AfDB to provide comprehensive information on how targeted investments will expedite a just energy transition, specifically by ensuring energy access for marginalized communities. In addition, ACCESS Coalition calls on MDBs to prioritize actions that promote energy transition policy reforms. By taking the lead in advancing towards a just and sustainable energy future, we can make a significant difference.

- **The AfDB and other MDBs to increase financing for Decentralized Renewable Energy (DRE) solutions and clean cooking to at least 20% in Africa.** *“The issue of clean cooking is often underestimated, resulting in inadequate financing compared to other energy priorities. Without the necessary funding and investments, the clean cooking sector cannot make significant strides towards achieving the objectives of SDG 7”.* - Patricia Mbogo, ACCESS Coalition International Coordinator. Meeting the growing demand for electricity in African countries with polluting energy sources will hinder efforts to limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C. Unfortunately, nearly half of Africa’s population lacks access to electricity, and 900 million people lack access to clean cooking fuels and technologies.<sup>2</sup> The current progress is insufficient to achieve the targets of SDG 7, as 2.4 billion people globally still lack access to clean cooking.<sup>3</sup> DRE is the fastest and most reliable approach to accelerate clean energy access.<sup>4</sup> Increasing financial investments in clean energy will facilitate progress in achieving energy access for communities.<sup>5</sup>
- **Commitment for a just energy transition by AfDB.** To achieve a just energy transition and fulfill Africa’s SDG 7 commitments, the AfDB and other MDBs must prioritize financing for electricity and cooking investments that provide access to marginalized communities. While President Adesina emphasizes using natural gas for energy solutions,<sup>6</sup> ACCESS Coalition members in Africa witness the negative impact of climate change on vulnerable communities. They believe that continued reliance on fossil fuels, including gas, will exacerbate these effects. While options like LPG, natural gas, and improved cookstoves play a role in clean cooking, transitioning to cooking with clean electricity and renewables has already begun worldwide, renewable energy is now the most cost-effective source for two-thirds of the global population, and Africa has vast potential in wind, hydropower, geothermal, and solar energy.



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1 The Africa Investment Forum showcased deals including: West African 27 MW hydropower project that will service 700,000 households and reduce Co2 emissions by 81,000 tons each year. And in Southern Africa, a hydro-power independent power producer that will generate 544,000 MWh per year of energy. <https://www.afdb.org/en/news-and-events/press-releases/africa-investment-forum-showcases-1475-billion-green-and-renewable-energy-deals-african-development-bank-2023-annual-meetings-61353>

2 Africa Energy Outlook 2022, <https://www.iea.org/reports/africa-energy-outlook-2022>

3 SDG 7 Progress Report 2022, [https://trackingsdg7.esmap.org/data/files/download-documents/sdg7-report2022-ch5-international\\_financial\\_flows.pdf](https://trackingsdg7.esmap.org/data/files/download-documents/sdg7-report2022-ch5-international_financial_flows.pdf)

4 World Bank Group Announces Major Initiative to Electrify Sub-Saharan Africa with Distributed Renewable Energy, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2022/11/09/world-bank-group-announces-major-initiative-to-electrify-sub-saharan-africa-with-distributed-renewable-energy>

5 Ibid

6 Closing Speech by Dr. Akinwumi A. Adesina President, African Development Bank Group - Annual Meetings 2023, African Development Bank Group - Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt. 26 May 2023, <https://www.afdb.org/en/news-and-events/speeches/closing-speech-dr-akinwumi-adesina-president-african-development-bank-group-annual-meetings-2023-african-development-bank-group-sharm-el-sheikh-egypt-26-may-2023-61549>

**For further information please contact:** [communications@access-coalition.org](mailto:communications@access-coalition.org)

**ACCESS Coalition** – <https://access-coalition.org>

