

PRESS RELEASE

AFREC Takes Continental Renewable Energy Capacity Programme to Zambia



Lusaka, Zambia, 1 - 5 September 2026 – The African Energy Commission (AFREC) convened about 50 energy professionals from across Africa in Lusaka, Zambia for a five-day Continental Training on Renewable Energy Project Planning, Development, and Financing aimed at strengthening African institutions' capacity to develop, finance, and implement bankable renewable energy projects. The training, which built on previous continental training cohorts, brought together officials and professionals from energy ministries, regulatory authorities, utilities and other energy institutions from AU Member States.

Hosted in collaboration with the Republic of Zambia's Ministry of Energy, the programme is supported by the Government of Sweden through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), delivered in collaboration with the Strathmore Energy Research Centre (SERC) supported by the Africa-EU Energy Partnership (AEEP) through its Accelerating the Energy Transition in Africa (ENGAGE) programme, funded by the German Government through the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The training responds to one of Africa's major energy sector challenges: converting the continent's vast renewable energy potential and national energy ambitions into projects that are technically sound, financially viable, and ready for implementation.

Opening the training, Mr. Yagouba Traore, Head of Policy, Planning, and Strategy at AFREC, said Africa's challenge was increasingly about addressing the human and institutional capacity constraints that continue to affect project delivery. "Africa does not lack energy resources, strategies or ambition. The challenge is the persistent gap between potential and implementation, and between projects on paper and those capable of attracting finance and delivering electricity. This is, in large part, a capacity gap," said Mr. Traore.

During the training, participants are being equipped with practical knowledge covering the full renewable energy project lifecycle, including energy planning, resource assessment, site selection, technology choices, grid integration, procurement, financing, policy and regulatory frameworks, and project management.

Rather than focusing solely on theoretical knowledge, the programme combines technical sessions with case studies, practical tools, group exercises and peer-to-peer learning.

Particular attention is placed on project bankability and investment readiness, including the technical, regulatory, procurement and financial conditions required to mobilise public and private investment.

Mr Mafayo Ziba, Director of Energy, Ministry of Energy, Republic of Zambia, said the training was particularly timely as African countries seek to diversify their energy systems and translate renewable energy potential into viable projects. “Africa is endowed with abundant renewable energy resources, but we must turn this potential into viable projects that attract investment and deliver reliable electricity. For Zambia, recent power-sector challenges highlight the need to diversify our generation mix and build greater resilience. This training is therefore timely, strengthening the capacity to develop technically sound, financially viable and implementable renewable energy projects,” said Mr Ziba.

Also speaking at the opening ceremony, Dr. Towela Nyirenda-Jere, Head of the Africa-EU Energy Partnership, said unlocking Africa’s renewable energy potential requires simultaneous investment in projects, institutions, and people. “Closing this gap requires more than ambition—it requires bankable projects, resilient regulatory frameworks and strong technical expertise. The knowledge shared here will empower the ministries, utilities and regulators driving Africa’s clean energy transition,” said Dr. Nyirenda-Jere.

Through the Accelerating the Energy Transition in Africa (ENGAGE) programme, AEEP supports continental, regional and national partners in accelerating renewable energy investment and improving access to energy, reflecting a shared commitment to seeing continental and international energy cooperation translating into practical support which is responsive to African institution’s priorities and capacity needs.

Given its experience in hydropower development, renewable energy, regional power integration and energy-sector reform, Zambia was strategically selected to host the training to provide an opportunity for participants to engage directly with Zambia’s experience and draw lessons applicable to their own national contexts. The programme’s practical dimension included a field learning visit to the Kafue Gorge Regional Training Centre, where participants visited the Kafue Gorge Power Station, the 10 MW Namalundu Solar Power Plant, and the KGRTC wind site to connect discussions on project planning, technology, grid integration, financing and operations with actual energy infrastructure.

AFREC will continue working with Member States and partners to connect knowledge to policy, policy to projects, and projects to implementation, strengthening the human and institutional capabilities needed to transform Africa’s abundant energy resources into infrastructure, investment and development opportunities.

Notes to the Editor:

The [African Energy Commission \(AFREC\)](#) is a specialised energy agency of the African Union mandated to coordinate, harmonise and promote the development of Africa’s energy sector. AFREC works with AU Member States and Regional Economic Communities to support energy policy development, strengthen energy data and information systems, promote the rational exploitation and development of energy resources, and advance regional and continental energy cooperation.

The [Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency \(Sida\)](#), supports AFREC’s efforts to strengthen institutional and human capacity across Africa’s energy sector. The partnership supports the development of practical skills, knowledge systems and institutional capabilities required by African Union Member States to advance their energy priorities.

The **Africa-EU Energy Partnership (AEEP)** is a long-term framework for strategic dialogue and cooperation between Africa and the European Union on energy. AEEP supports the advancement of renewable energy, energy access, investment and knowledge exchange and is supporting the Lusaka training through the Accelerating the Energy Transition in Africa (ENGAGE) programme, funded by the German Government through BMZ.

The **Strathmore Energy Research Centre (SERC)** is an African research and training institution specializing in renewable energy and energy efficiency. SERC works with AFREC in the development and delivery of the renewable energy project planning, development and financing curriculum, combining technical expertise with practical tools and African case studies.

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