

CONCEPT NOTE

Advancing Regulatory Improvements to Accelerate Private Sector Investment to Meet SDG7 and Energy Transition Goals in Africa

11th of July 2023, 8:00 – 9:30 am (EST); 15:00 – 16:30 (GMT+3 time zone)

**United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
Side Event, On-Line**

Background

The High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), in accordance with resolutions of the General Assembly, provides political leadership, guidance and recommendations on sustainable development, and offers a platform for dialogue. In this regard, the HLPF 2023 focuses on **Accelerating the recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels**. Recovery from the impacts of COVID-19 and increasing momentum towards achieving SDG goals are essential to remain on track towards the 2030 goals.

In relation to this objective, this side-event focuses on addressing the current gaps in accelerating SDG7 goals in Africa and sustaining increased momentum towards 2030. The side-event will particularly focus on the crucial area of private sector investment participation in accelerating electricity access and renewable energy development in Africa, accelerate energy transition and build further resilience in addressing the negative impacts of COVID-19 on SDG7 in Africa. The theme of the side-event is **Advancing Regulatory Improvements to Accelerate Private Sector Investment to Meet SDG7 and Energy Transition Goals in Africa.**”

Achieving the goals set by the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 requires substantial investments in infrastructure development over the next decade and improving electricity capacity to meet SDG7. Thus far, African governments have shouldered the bulk of the responsibility to finance energy infrastructure development through public resources and bilateral and multilateral financial arrangements with development partners. The Infrastructure Consortium for Africa recognizes that private sector still plays too limited a role in financing infrastructure investments in the Continent, averaging about 23.5% of total commitments in the year 2020 – 26% in the energy sector. With rising debt-to-GDP ratios, a tax-to-GDP ratio of 13%, and the effects of COVID-19, the space for public spending on infrastructure has narrowed. Private sector investment is essential to complement public sector efforts to sustainably finance infrastructure development.

The role of conducive policy and regulatory (P&R) frameworks in crowding-in private investments is widely recognized. In the African context, however, policy and regulatory frameworks are still perceived by investors as a major barrier and a deterrent to entering African markets. While no one-size-fits-all solution exists in terms of policy and regulatory reforms, their impact in ensuring appropriate openness, attractiveness and readiness of markets towards private investments has to be carefully considered by decision-makers.

In discussing these issues in-depth and proposing viable ways forward to accelerate financing of Africa's electricity Infrastructure development, the side-event will: (1) present the latest SDG7 status and progress report of the UN to stakeholders and high light key findings and recommendations; and (2) create a platform for dialogue on policy and regulatory challenges and solutions to accelerate private sector Investment In the electricity sector of Africa. Participants to the side-event will have the opportunity to take stoke of the latest assessments and insights and contribute their perspectives and solutions through this dialogue.

Objectives of the side event

The goal of the side event is to deepen discussion on regulation and private sector investment in Africa to advance SDG7, accelerate energy transition and support robust recovery from COVID-19. The tracking progress report on SDG7 and the UNECA-RES4Africa regulatory assessment in member States offer valuable background technical information to the discussions, and are available on the websites of UNECA and RES4Africa. It also aims to solicit insights from stakeholders on accelerating private sector investment to meet these goals.

Participation

The meeting is expected to attract participation from public sector policy and regulatory institutions, stakeholders from the electricity sector of Africa, experts from member States, private sector operators, non-governmental organizations, civil society, think-tanks, regional and continental organizations, and interested participants.

Access to the On-line Side-Event Platform

The side-event will take place on **July 11, 2023** through an on-line platform. The time of the side-event is from 8:00 – 9:30 am (EST); which is 15:00 – 16:30 (GMT+3 time zone, or Addis Ababa, Ethiopia time). The meeting link is: <https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/491c9351-1ea8-4100-92b0-984300850c79@517c8e6d-275d-49a8-8c8a-954bbbc60de9>