

CONCEPT NOTE

Energy Integration for Post-Covid19 Economic Recovery and Sustainable Development in Africa

March 30, 2021: 3PM – 5.30 PM

Energy, both as an economic input and output, is central to Africa's sustainable development, and lack of it hinders social and economic developments. Africa has tremendous energy potential, but more than 600 million Africans do not have access to electricity. Energy poverty partly explains the low level of implementation of Sustainable Development Goals in Africa. Making things worse, the pandemic hits.

The Corona pandemic is ravaging the globe, and Africa is no different. Given its relatively weak economic and social structures, the impact of the pandemic on Africa will be devastating. 'After' the pandemic, 23 million more Africans will fall below the poverty line, and the number of people living on food aid will nearly double. As Africa fights the pandemic through series of lockdown measures, the resulting slow economic activity is robbing out the gains of economic growth registered during the previous decade and further exacerbating the social and economic hardships in the continent. The pandemic also impacts the energy sector as many people can no longer afford essential electricity services and energy investment decreased by one-third.

In such a context, the African Ministers in charge of the environment adopted an African Green Stimulus Program to guide the continent's economic recovery. The African Union launched the Single African Electricity Market to facilitate energy trade integration across the continent. Meanwhile, regional energy integration and trade has been hailed as essential for the overall development of the energy sector and dubbed as Africa's plausible approach towards ensuring energy security for its sustained economic and social development.

Africa needs to reflect on how regional energy integration contributes to energising its economic recovery program and attainment of sustainable development. The dynamics

received much attention from academia, policy circles, and practitioners. This Institute of Diplomacy and International Studies sponsored Webinar series brings together these interested parties to discuss energy integration's role in post-COVID-19 economic recovery, identify specific challenges by private developers in Africa, and propose actionable points as a way forward.