

SEVENTH MEETING OF THE ISA REGIONAL
COMMITTEE FOR THE AFRICA REGION

02 – 04 SEPTEMBER 2025 | ACCRA, GHANA

**Africa Priority for Solar: ISA's Alignment with Mission 300 for Bolstering Energy Access in Africa****3rd September 2025, Time (in 10:15-11:15 hours)****Accra, Ghana**Registration link: https://isa.int/rcm_africa**Context and Rationale**

Africa stands at the intersection of vast renewable energy potential and urgent development needs. Despite possessing some of the world's most abundant solar resources, the continent attracts less than 1% of global solar investments. This chronic underinvestment is slowing the pace of electrification and leaving more than 600 million people without access to electricity, the majority of whom live in rural and underserved areas. Electrification rates reveal a stark divide: approximately 78% in urban areas compared to just 28% in rural regions.

Recognising Africa's pivotal role in achieving global energy access targets, ISA has made the continent a strategic priority. The World Bank's Mission 300 aims to connect 300 million Africans to electricity by 2030, placing decentralised renewable energy at its core. ISA's strategy complements this mission by focusing on targeted deployment of decentralised solar in last-mile communities, providing policy and regulatory support to attract private sector investment, building local technical and institutional capacity, and catalysing finance through concessional and blended funding mechanisms to de-risk investments.

Key Challenges in Scaling Decentralised Solar in Africa

- **Underinvestment in the Sector:** The continent attracts less than 1% of global solar investments. This chronic funding gap limits the development of viable project pipelines, slows innovation, and prevents markets from achieving the scale needed to lower costs and expand access.
- **Financial Constraints:** The high upfront costs, coupled with limited access to affordable, long-term financing, make adoption challenging—especially for low-income households. Local financing ecosystems remain underdeveloped, with few tailored products designed for rural consumers. At the same time, private investors often perceive decentralised solar markets as high risk due to their fragmentation and the uncertainty of returns.

- **Socio-economic Barriers:** Awareness of Solar's benefits and maintenance requirements is limited, while local technical capacity for installation, operation, and after-sales service remains insufficient to support widespread adoption.
- **Policy and Regulatory Challenges:** In many countries, inconsistent regulatory frameworks and unclear licensing procedures for off-grid systems create uncertainty for investors and developers. Weak policy incentives, the absence of comprehensive national off-grid strategies, and a lack of harmonised quality standards across markets further slow progress.
- **Infrastructure and Supply Chain Issues:** Delivering solar equipment to remote areas is costly, with high logistics expenses, limited warehousing, poor distribution networks, and burdensome import duties adding to the challenge.

ISA's Commitment and Alignment with Mission 300

The World Bank's Mission 300 aims to connect 300 million Africans to electricity by 2030, with decentralised renewable energy as a central pillar. ISA's strategy complements this mission by:

- **Targeted Deployment:** Prioritising decentralised solar for last-mile communities.
- **Policy and Regulatory Support:** Streamlining rules to attract private sector investment.
- **Capacity Building:** Developing local technical and institutional capabilities.
- **Catalysing Finance:** Mobilising concessional and blended finance to de-risk investments.

ISA's partnership with Mission 300 will focus on country-specific solar acceleration plans, donor coordination, and harmonising quality and performance standards for decentralised solutions.

Leveraging the Global Solar Facility (GSF)

The Global Solar Facility, ISA's flagship financing platform, can significantly boost Mission 300's impact by:

- **Blended Finance:** Using concessional funds, guarantees, and risk-sharing tools to draw private capital.
- **Pipeline Development:** Funding feasibility studies and early-stage project preparation to bridge bankability gaps.
- **Market Aggregation:** Standardising specifications and pooling procurement to reduce costs.
- **End-User Affordability:** Supporting PAYG and microfinance models to make solar accessible for low-income households.

Through GSF, ISA can act as a financial catalyst, converting decentralised solar potential into real, bankable projects.

Objectives of the Plenary Session

The high-level ministerial discussion during this session will serve as a platform for African governments, development partners, financiers, private developers, and civil society to share

strategies, best practices, and partnership opportunities to accelerate energy access through decentralised solar. By aligning with Mission 300, ISA seeks to catalyse decisive action and drive sustainable energy solutions that will transform the lives of millions in underserved communities. The primary objective of this session is:

- Highlight Africa’s decentralised solar opportunity in the context of underinvestment and energy access gaps.
- Showcase ISA’s strategic alignment with the Mission 300.
- Discuss how Africa Solar Facility can unlock finance for decentralised solar markets.
- Build collaboration between governments, financiers, and private developers.
- Identify actionable pathways for scaling decentralised solar in underserved regions.

Agenda

Wednesday, 03rd September 2025

Venue: Labadi Beach Hotel, Accra, Ghana	
Session format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panel format: Ministerial level. • Each speaker will have 10 minutes for opening remarks, followed by a moderated discussion and audience Q&A.
Time: 09:45 – 10:45 Hrs	
Moderator	Mr. Ashish Khanna, Director General, International Solar Alliance
Speakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.E. John Abdulai Jinapor, Minister of Energy and Green Transition, Ghana • Hon’ble Minister Adebayo A. Adelabu, Federal Ministry of Power, Nigeria • H.E. Dr. Mohamed Shaker-Elmarkabi, Former Minister of Electricity and Renewable Energy, Egypt, Chairman of Shaker Consultancy Group. • H.E. Mr. Monie Captan, Former Foreign Minister and CEO of Liberia Electricity Corporation • Mr. Vijay Iyer, Former Vice President of MIGA and head of Africa energy of World Bank. • Dr. Daniel Schroth, Director for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency, Africa Development Bank (AfDB).
