

SEVENTH MEETING OF THE ISA REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE AFRICA REGION

02 – 04 SEPTEMBER 2025 | ACCRA, GHANA



Shaping Tomorrow: Advancing Solar Skills and Youth Entrepreneurship in Africa

04 September 2025, 12:30 – 14:00 hrs

Accra, Ghana

Registration link: https://isa.int/rcm_africa

BACKGROUND

Africa's Defining Moment: Ambition Meets Urgency

Africa stands at the crossroads of opportunity and urgency. While over 600 million people still lack access to reliable electricity, the continent is home to the world's youngest population—60% under the age of 25. Unlocking Africa's clean energy future depends not just on infrastructure and finance, but on people. Building green technical, entrepreneurial, and digital skills among youth is critical to powering universal energy access, creating jobs, and driving inclusive growth.

The Clean Energy Opportunity—and the Skills Gap

The clean energy transition is both a climate imperative and an economic opportunity. Solar and decentralized renewables are expanding rapidly across Africa, yet a shortage of skilled workers threatens to slow progress. At the same time, youth entrepreneurs are pioneering solutions—from solar microgrids to clean cooking technologies—but face barriers in scaling due to weak support ecosystems. Closing this gap requires urgent, collective action to invest in skills, innovation, and enabling environments where youth can thrive.

EXPECTED OUTCOME

Spotlighting Youth Innovation and Green Skills

This session will spotlight the intersection of green skills development and youth-led innovation as a cornerstone for Africa's energy access and transition. Discussions will explore workforce development in renewable energy, youth entrepreneurship in off-grid and mini-grid innovation, public-private partnerships for skills and job creation, and the role of digital tools and AI in advancing clean energy solutions. It will also address the policy, regulatory, and financing frameworks needed to support youth innovation at scale.

Objectives: Bridging the Divide with Action

The session objectives are to highlight the role of youth in bridging Africa's energy access divide, showcase successful youth-led innovations, identify scalable strategies for training, mentorship, and enterprise support, and generate policy and financing recommendations for green skills development. The discussion will also draw on insights from ISA's Solar PV Skills and Jobs in Africa Study to inform national and regional action.

From Dialogue to Delivery: Youth as Architects of Africa's Future

The session aims to deliver a shared understanding of Africa's green skills gap, concrete policy and regulatory recommendations, and strengthened partnerships for youth empowerment. By equipping Africa's youth with the skills and support to drive innovation, the continent can leapfrog into a renewable energy future shaped by its people—not just its technologies. This is an invitation to move from ambition to delivery, with Africa's youth leading the charge toward a just and sustainable energy transition.

AGENDA

Time	Agenda
12:30–12:35 hrs	Opening Remarks by Mr. Ashish Khanna, Director General, ISA
12:35–12:45 hrs	Keynote Address by Mr. Ibrahim Matola, Minister of Energy, Ministry of Energy, Republic of Malawi *
12:45–12:55 hrs	Presentation on the findings of ISA study on Solar PV Skills and Jobs in Africa, offering new data, case studies, with actionable insights and recommendations for the region by Ms. Namrata Mukherjee, ISA
12:55–13:55 hrs	<p>Panel Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Prof. Ambuj Sagar, School of Public Policy, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi.▪ Mr. Vijay Iyer, Former Vice President of MIGA and Head of Africa Energy of World Bank.▪ Mr. Atul Bagai, Former Country Director, UNEP India.▪ Mr. Adabre Akasoba Frank, CEO, Northlite Solar.▪ Mr. Gaetan Masson, CEO & Founder, Becquerel Institute <p>Moderated by Ms. Onyi Iyizoba, Legal Specialist, ISA</p>
13:55–14:00 hrs	Closing Remarks by Dr. Barakat Ahmed, Regional Programme Head – Africa, ISA

*TBC
