

POWER^{FOR}ALL

4 July 2016

Dr. Akinwumi Adesina
President, African Development Bank Group
Avenue Joseph Anoma
01 BP 1387 Abidjan 01
Côte d'Ivoire

Dear Dr. Adesina,

Power for All is a coalition of decentralized renewable energy companies and civil society organizations working across Africa and globally. **We represent thousands of African employees already serving millions of energy customers in Africa.**

Our goal is to accelerate the deployment of energy services, ensuring no one is left behind - and we believe the sector's track record proves distributed renewables are the fastest, most cost-effective and sustainable path to achieving this. The purpose of this letter is two-fold:

First, we want to congratulate you on the 2016-2025 Strategy for the New Deal on Energy for Africa. As you have often noted, the African continent is in dire need of game changers to accelerate access to modern energy for the 650 million Africans without electricity. We were further encouraged by your statement at the Bank's Annual Meeting that "fast-tracking off-grid connections is not only faster, but cheap".

Experts agree it is possible to universalize access to all Africans by 2025, but only by radically ramping up decentralized renewable energy technologies and business models - and **treating them as core components of Development Banks' strategies.**

The efforts of the small, innovative teams working on the Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa, the Green Mini-Grid Development program and the SE4All Africa Hub have laid the groundwork for the Bank to expand and build on decentralized renewable approaches, in order to deliver universal access on this ambitious timeline.

This underpins the second reason we are reaching out: you are facing a critical human resource decision right now that will impact the Bank's ability to deliver on the fastest and most affordable energy access solutions. The newly created position of **Vice President, Power, Energy and Green Growth, who will lead the Transformative Partnership on Energy, must be someone whose explicit objective is bringing a novel, outside-the-box thinking into this key position. If not, *business as usual will mean energy poverty as usual.***

Currently, the vast majority of Bank money and human resources is spent on large scale infrastructure projects and grids that take multiple years to deploy. **This needs to change.**

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The 2025 stated target for the New Deal for Energy in Africa is a mere nine years away. This is the same number of years it takes, on average, for a single, [large donor-supported power plant to go from conception to delivery](#).

In light of this urgency, at the AfDB's Annual Meeting, Power for All released a paper presenting a simple, alternative framework for MDBs to accelerate energy access: [Decentralized Renewable Energy: The Fast Track to Energy Access](#). It looks at fast, proven ways MDBs can accelerate deployment of energy access technologies that are needed to meet objectives such as the New Deal on Energy for Africa; the types of ideas that a new Vice President needs to engage to ensure the New Deal is the success we all want it to be.

In selecting a new Vice President, you have an opportunity to move the AfDB from a bank investing a *de minimus* level ([less than 1%](#)) of its energy portfolio in the most promising suite of technologies for energy access (decentralized renewables), **to one of global leadership**.

Regrettably, the summary posting for this position shared globally via the AfDB website, the Economist and social media, was silent on decentralized solutions, business models and technologies. Rather, it stressed experience in ["large-scale electrification; mega-project execution."](#) **It was an advertisement for business as usual - for energy poverty as usual.**

Power for All and its undersigned partners and supporters call on the AfDB not to forfeit this opportunity but to seize it and recruit a professional who can lead alongside national government partners and others to break the bindings of a 19th century energy system in Africa and lead the 650 million Africans without electricity, and the more than 700 million lacking access to clean cooking, to brighter lives and livelihoods. A professional is needed who can push the Bank to recognize and act on the fact that delivering a New Deal for Energy in Africa will require disrupting business as usual at the AfDB with new partnerships, business models and financial products.

The Power for All partners, including the 24 undersigned entities, stand ready to work with your teams to achieve this.

Best regards,



Kristina Skierka, Campaign Director
Power for All
www.PowerForAll.org

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