374,000 jobs created across Africa and 80,000 across India in 2022.

DRE sector showed resilience through COVID-19, with milder job losses compared to the overall economy and a fast recovery.

The Decentralized Renewable Energy (DRE) sector establishes its status as a large, stable, and resilient employer in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and India, while improving energy access.

The DRE workforce

Women’s participation in direct employment is higher than the traditional energy sector and has improved since Powering Jobs Census 2019, but is still far from parity (Kenya: 41%; Ethiopia and Nigeria: 37%; Uganda: 28%; India: 21%). The shares closely mirror the overall female labor force shares of each country.

More mature markets have a higher share of skilled workers, as larger systems (like C&I Standalone or Mini-grids) require workers with advanced technical skills, such as installation technicians and maintenance professionals, versus Pico-solar and SHS (that require mostly sales agents).

Over 50% of the companies surveyed provide some level of training (either internal or external) to their employees, but there are still some barriers such as lack of financial resources or a standardized curriculum that hinder the required training and reskilling necessary for the DRE sector to rapidly mature.

The DRE jobs

The sector has a lower share of informality than the broader economy, an interesting finding in highly informal economies like SSA and India. Formality increased across the five focus countries since 2019’s Powering Jobs Census.

Pico-solar and solar home systems (SHS) firms account for the most jobs in all focus countries. Standalone C&I systems also generate a significant share of jobs (47% in India, 30% in Ethiopia, and over 10% in Kenya) and are expected to keep increasing as markets mature to larger systems.

Larger markets (India, Kenya, Nigeria) are more consolidated, with larger firms accounting for the majority of DRE employment. In Ethiopia and Uganda, jobs are more evenly distributed across small, medium and large firms.

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