GERMANWATCH

Brot für die Welt

Catalyzing Africa's Renewable Energy Transformation

A Theory of Change

Africa's energy landscape is defined by a paradox of abundance amidst deprivation.

Introduction

Africa stands at a pivotal moment in shaping its energy future. Despite holding 60 % of the world's best solar resources, the continent has installed only 56 GW of renewable capacity, and renewables account for just 20 % of electricity generation. Meanwhile, 2023 figures show that approximately 750 million[1] people worldwide lack access to electricity, and over 2 billion people[2] still lack access to clean cooking solutions, with the majority located in sub-Saharan Africa and developing Asia. Sub-Saharan Africa is particularly affected, with approximately 570 million people still lacking access to electricity and around 80 % of households lacking access to clean cooking fuels or technologies[3].

Overall, Africa's energy landscape is defined by a paradox of abundance amidst deprivation. Vast renewable potential coexists with persistent energy poverty, in part due to deep structural legacies of fossil fuel dependency, extractive economic models, and fragile, outdated colonial-era infrastructure systems[4], and often a short-sighted and fragmented energy development agenda, facilitated by a lack of sufficient and sustainable financing. As a result, Africa contributes the least to global emissions yet bears disproportionate costs of climate instability, limited economic opportunities, and constrained social and economic development.

Overcoming these interconnected challenges and seizing the opportunities requires a transformative and systemic approach, one that positions renewable energy not only as a technological solution but as the foundation for just economic transformation, climate resilience, energy sovereignty, and improved well-being across the continent. In response, this Theory of Change (ToC) presents a strategic, systems-oriented framework for advancing a 100 % renewable energy future by 2030, one that links energy access, renewable energy deployment, and green industrialization as mutually reinforcing pathways toward sustainable and transformative development, climate justice, and stronger African agency.

Key Challenges:

+ Persistent energy access crisis (over half a billion people without electricity and many more without access to clean cooking energy services).
+ Over-reliance on fossil fuels and centralized, colonial-era infrastructure.
+ Fragmented policies and weak cross-border coordination.
+ Limited fiscal space and high debt burdens constrain public investment.
+ Extractive industries and low-value exports dominate economies.
+ Inequities in access to finance, technology, and decision-making.
  Fragmented action on energy, development, and climate action
+ Limited linkages between energy development and climate actions with social and economic transformation
+ Dominant fossil fuels narratives

Key Opportunities:

+ Abundant renewable resources (solar, wind, hydro, geothermal).
+ Clear continental policies, initiatives, and visions for Africa's energy future, including Agenda 2063 and Mission 300
+ Growing regional integration efforts (AfCFTA, AfSEM, regional power pools).
+ Young, dynamic population eager for green jobs and inclusive growth.
+ Emerging innovation ecosystems in renewables, digital tools, and green industries.
+ Strong global advocacy and momentum for climate, transformative development, and just transitions.
+ Cultural and political narratives are shifting toward climate and energy justice, African agency, energy sovereignty, and leadership.

The Theory of Change serves as a shared reference point to inspire dialogue, exchange, and collaboration around ideas, practices, and solutions.

About this Theory of Change

This Theory of Change(ToC) serves as a framework to guide and strengthen the work of Bread for the World and Germanwatch as they contribute to Africa's energy transformation. By envisioning the desired change and the pathways through which it can occur, it provides a coherent foundation for strategic decision-making and for designing initiatives, activities, and collaborations with diverse stakeholders in support of Africa's energy-transformation goals.

The ToC also clarifies the organization's energy strategy by defining what we aim to achieve and how specific activities will lead to measurable outcomes. It also supports effective planning and programme design by making the logical connections between inputs, outputs, and long-term goals explicit. At the same time, it serves as a practical roadmap for implementation, helping us prioritize actions, stay aligned with our objectives, and make informed decisions that maximize impact.

The ToC is also envisaged as a resource to support Bread for the World and Germanwatch partners in navigating the diverse and complex pathways of renewable energy development and transformative potential across the continent, to ensure targeted collaborations and impactful outcomes. In this way, the ToC not only clarifies how we aim to achieve impact but also strengthens the collective capacity of partners and stakeholders to transform Africa's renewable energy landscape in a just, inclusive, and sustainable manner.

Ultimately, it reflects our commitment to working collaboratively, strategically, and transparently with all relevant stakeholders to advance a just, inclusive, and sustainable energy transformation in Africa.

Importantly, this ToC is not a universal blueprint for all African countries. Instead, it serves as a shared reference point to inspire dialogue, exchange, and collaboration around ideas, practices, and solutions. It also aims to inform and strengthen deliberation, design, and advocacy processes that advance just renewable energy development and socio-economic transformation in ways that remain locally grounded, equitable, and responsive to local needs and priorities. Crucially, this is a living document, emphasizing that approaches must be adapted to specific contexts, priorities, and realities of each country, and adjusted as new data and information become available.

The added value of this Theory of Change lies in its practical application to:

+ Shape and communicate enabling narratives that align with diverse energy and development needs across Africa;
+ Build and support partnerships and collaborations that can trigger and accelerate renewable energy transformation.
+ Identify gaps and opportunities for continued action.
+ Provide clarity on the current status, envisioned future, and the roles and contributions of key actors in shaping that future; and
+ Advocate for and support just financing and implementation conditions that ensure equitable and effective social and economic outcomes.

Approach and Methodology

The ToC is informed by an extensive literature review[5] and co-created by African experts, civil society actors, researchers, and practitioners working in close collaboration with German colleagues and with financial support from Bread for the World. It draws on the lived experiences and professional expertise of these stakeholders, while emphasizing the importance of inclusive processes and respectful partnerships. This co-creation process was carried out through two workshops and a series of expert interviews.

The first workshop took place during the UNFCCC SB62 in June 2025 in Bonn. The workshop brought together African and German civil society, academia, and policy experts, who identified key levers of change, potential entry points, and new narratives to accelerate Africa's just energy transformation.

Following that first workshop, a draft ToC was developed and tested in a second online workshop on the 30th of October, 2025. Additional expert interviews were conducted with key stakeholders in Germany and Africa to further stress-test, refine, strengthen, and contextualize the ToC.

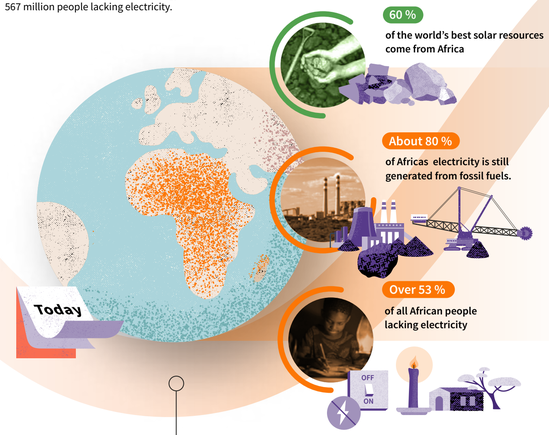
Catalyzing Africa's Renewable Energy Transformation

This theory of change is based on the concept of social tipping points. Social tipping points refer to critical thresholds in societal systems at which small changes can trigger large and often irreversible transformations. Societal systems typically remain in relatively stable states for extended periods of time, stabilized by prevailing norms, institutions, and existing power structures.

However, when sufficient pressure emerges—through political decisions, social movements, technological innovations, or shifts in societal norms — a critical threshold may be reached. Once this threshold is crossed, self-reinforcing processes (feedback loops) can emerge, which accelerate the transformation.

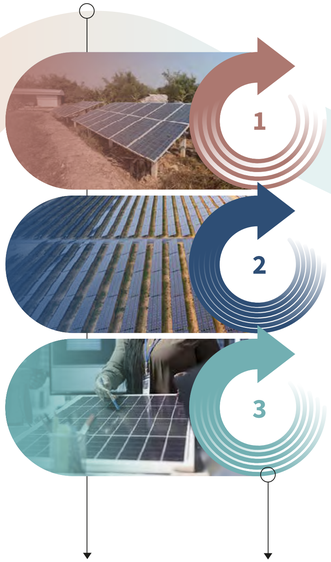
Current State

Despite holding 60 % of the world's best solar resources, Africa has only 56 GW of renewable capacity (mostly hydropower), generates just 20 % of its electricity from renewables, remains heavily dependent on fossil fuels, and faces a deep energy access crisis, with over 567 million people lacking electricity.



Enabling Conditions for…

1. the accelerated RE uptake by households, agriculture, and SMEs
2. improved storage and grid infrastructure and the development of utility-scale renewable projects
3. industrial pilot development



Medium-term (5 years)

Africa's desirable energy future will not be achieved by one targeted action, but multiple interconnected and reinforcing pathways.

Countries are on an irreversible path towards …

… 100 % energy access

… 100 % renewable energy-based systems

… green, renewable-based industrial development

Energy Access

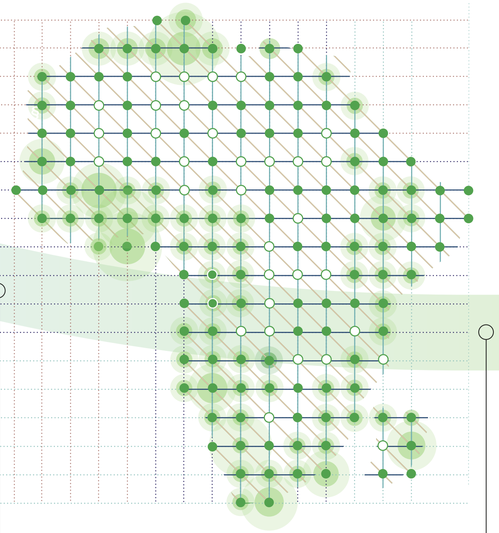
- Renewable Energy Uptake
- Cost Savings
- Societal Support
- Financial Support

RE Deployment

- Grid Expansion
- System Stability
- Integration
- Economic Opportunities
- Political Support
- Infrastructure Investment

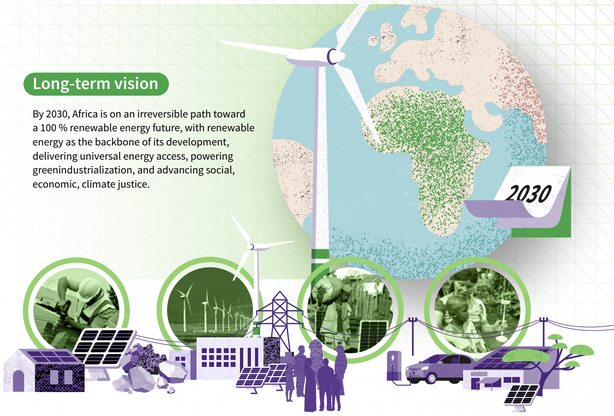
Green Industrialization

- Industrial Pilots
- Investor Confidence
- Regulatory Incentives
- Replication & Scaling
- Green Industrial Demand



Long-term vision

By 2030, Africa is on an irreversible path toward a 100 % renewable energy future, with renewable energy as the backbone of its development, delivering universal energy access, powering greeninindustrialization, and advancing social, economic, climate justice.



High-Level Assumptions

+ Mini-grids and decentralized energy systems are available, affordable can be deployed by house- holds, farmers and SMEs and can be integrated into national/ regional grids in the long-term.
+ Communities will accept, co-own, and benefit equitablyfrom renewable energy infrastructure.
+ Financing for energy, industrial, and infrastructure projects is available and affordable.
+ Governments, regulators, and utilities are committed and have capacity for planning and implementation of grid and storage infrastructure, utility-RE projects, and industrial pilots in line with climate justice and development objectives.
+ Technology costs remain affordable, and supply chains and skilled labour are sufficient to support deployment
+ Grid, transport, and industrial infrastructure develop in tandem with economic zones and energy access programs.
+ Regional trade and value chains expand under AfCFTA, with fair international trade conditions in place.
+ African countries have capacity for R&D, technology adaptation, and domestic industrial value creation.
+ Social protections, labour rights, and just- transition policies are implemented and enforced.
+ Macroeconomic, political, and external conditions remain stable enough to support long-term investment.

Stable state | Critical threshold | Self-reinforcing processes | Acceleration of transformation | Sustainable change

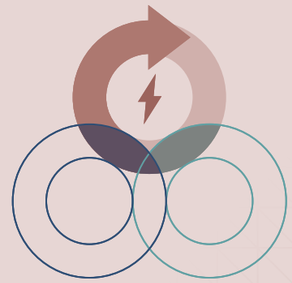
1 Enabling Conditions for the accelerated RE uptake by households, agriculture, and SMEs

Policy and Regulatory

+ **Quality standards** for RE particularly PV technology
+ **Subsidies for RE technology** (e.g. solar panels) and favourable import conditions for RE (e.g. exempt solar PV imports from duties and taxes)
+ **Stepwise phase-out of fossil fuel subsidies** in areas where electrification and renewable energy are the most cost-effective options, while ensuring that poorer populations receive adequate support
+ **Government support programmes for farmers, SMEs and households** for renewable energy and electrification (e.g. energy Access development program), shifting away from isolated, short-term project funding towards coordinated, long-term programmatic finance that aligns with national and regional energy visions, community priorities, and just transition goals.

Finance

+ **Local banks** provide micro-finance for farmers and households for decentralised RE systems (e.g. solar pumps, solar home systems, etc.), as well as cooperatives and communities for mini-and micro-grids
+ **Finance That Serves People and Planet:** Energy is financed not as a commodity, but as a public good and basic right, meeting diverse needs—from clean cooking to industrial power—with a focus on affordability, accessibility, and added social value (e.g. education, health, livelihoods).
+ **Equity-centred financial instruments:**
  + Public and highly concessional finance that de-risks strategic investments without driving privatization.
  + Financing models that explicitly support low-income households and low-revenue markets and reduces risk for communities and cooperative models



Technology and Innovation

+ **Capacity training and skills development** for local engineers trained for installation and maintenance of the technology.
+ **Availability** of skilled technical personnel
+ **Access** to vetted suppliers of decentralised and off-grid renewable energy-based systems and off-grid storage technology.

Governance and Institutionalization

Leveraging trusted, widespread institutions such as religious institutions (churches, mosques) or universities and schools—often present in nearly every village—reduces last-mile delivery costs, facilitates access to micro-finance, and can reduce risks for external funders, helps enforce technology quality standards e.g. by endorsing vetted suppliers, and builds community trust through respected local leaders, making energy and development projects more scalable, durable, and impactful.

2 Enabling Conditions for improved storage and grid infrastructure and the development of utility-scale renewable projects

Policy and Regulatory

+ **Clear, consistent renewable energy targets and regulations** that give investors and utilities long-term certainty.

+ **Fossil fuel phaseout / transition plans** aligned with sustainable industrialization, energy access, and economic development—driven by African agency

+ **Integrated energy planning frameworks** that link energy access, grid expansion, storage deployment, and renewable build-out (avoiding siloed planning).

+ **Regulatory incentives** (e.g., capacity payments, time-of-use tariffs, grid access rules) that reward flexibility and storage services.

+ **Cross-border market rules and harmonized grid codes** (e.g., through AfSEM or regional power pools) that allow energy trade and system balancing.

+ **Policy Coherence and Regionalization:** Continental coordination (e.g. ECOWAS, AU Agenda 2063) supports shared energy vision, harmonized policies, and economies of scale—enabling cross-border power pools and intra-African trade.

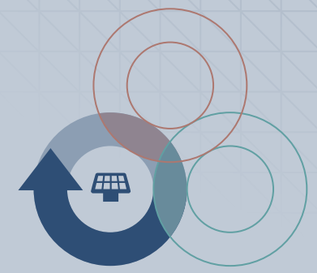
+ **Favourable subsidy structure:** Provide incentives for renewable energy technologies (e.g., tax and duty exemptions for solar PV imports) while gradually phasing out fossil fuel subsidies in regions where renewables are the most cost-effective, ensuring targeted support for vulnerable populations.

Finance

+ **Strengthening local and national banking institutions** enables them to design and finance bankable projects.

+ **Accessible and affordable finance mechanisms** to fund capital-intensive grid and storage projects.

+ **Risk mitigation tools** (e.g., guarantees, insurance, stable PPAs) that de-risk renewable and grid investments without driving privatization.



+ **Expand Fiscal Space for Public Investment:** Governments must reclaim fiscal capacity to invest in universal energy access, grids and storage, and RE deployment. This includes:
  + Ending harmful tax incentives for foreign investors and extractive industries.
  + Progressive domestic tax reforms (e.g., wealth, corporate, and carbon taxes).
  + Curtailing illicit financial flows and regulating transnational corporations to ensure they pay fair taxes.
  + Domestic resource mobilization

+ **Debt Justice as a Foundation for Sovereignty:** African countries need urgent and systematic cancellation of illegitimate and unsustainable debts—especially those incurred through fossil fuel or colonial-era infrastructure projects.
  + This frees up public budgets for strategic investments in renewable energy.
  + Global financial institutions must be restructured to support sovereign, climate-aligned borrowing, not extractive debt servicing.

+ **Bringing down the cost of capital:** Credit rating agencies adopt transparent, context-appropriate methodologies that accurately reflect Africa's reform progress and risk-mitigation instruments, thereby improving investor confidence and lowering the cost of capital.

Technology

+ **Modernized grid management systems** (smart grids, digital dispatch, forecasting tools) to integrate variable renewables efficiently.

+ **Availability of skilled technical personnel** for design, operation, and maintenance of advanced systems.

+ **An interconnection infrastructure** that allows cross-border energy flows, load sharing, and balancing.

+ **Standardized interoperability** between grid, storage, and generation assets (data systems, communications, safety protocols).

3 Enabling Conditions for industrial pilot development

Policy and Regulatory

Stable, Long-Term Industrial Policy Signals: Clear, predictable targets and sector strategies reduce investor uncertainty and create confidence that early pilots will evolve into long-term markets.

+ National green industrialisation roadmaps with 5–10 year visibility
+ Guaranteed long-term demand signals (e.g., public procurement for green materials, clean vehicle mandates)
+ Integration of industrial policy with energy planning to ensure reliable RE supply

Integrated energy planning frameworks and competitive renewable energy policies that link grid expansion, storage deployment, and renewable build-out (avoiding siloed planning). Industrialisation is only green if powered by abundant, low-cost renewable energy.

+ Refor for RE generation linked to industrial value chains
+ Infrastructure planning that aligns transport corridors, ports, and industrial zones

Regulatory incentives for First Movers and Emerging Value Chains:
Early-stage industries need temporary support to overcome high initial costs and technology risks.

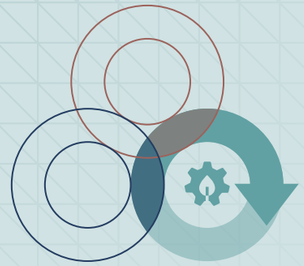
+ Tax incentives, rebates, or production credits
+ Import duty waivers for essential equipment during early stages
+ Results-based financing or matching grants for industrial pilots
+ Local-content frameworks that balance opportunity with competitiveness

Standards, Certification, and Trade Policies
Regulations ensuring quality and market access are crucial to building globally competitive green industries.

+ National and regional standards for green products (steel, batteries, EVs, fertilizers)
+ Carbon-intensity certification to meet EU and global market regulations
+ Harmonised AfCFTA standards and rules of origin to support regional value chains
+ Continental coordination (e.g. ECOWAS, AU Agenda 2063) supports shared energy vision, harmonized policies, and economies of scale—enabling cross-border power pools and intra-African trade.

Inclusive and Just Transition Policies
Industrialisation must contribute to social legitimacy and equitable development.

+ Community benefit agreements
+ Labour and environmental safeguards
+ Policies that ensure local participation in value creation
+ Mechanisms to avoid land conflicts and resource extraction injustices



Finance

Support for Local Banks and Financial Institutions – Build capacity to evaluate and finance industrial projects, including alternative credit assessments for local enterprises.

De-risking Mechanisms and Access to Finance
Industries such as green hydrogen, batteries, or EV assembly require capital-intensive investments.

+ Public guarantees, blended finance, and risk-sharing facilities
+ Export credit and development bank financing
+ Long-term capital finance arrangements

Domestic Resource Mobilisation – Encourage the use of domestic capital for green industrial projects to strengthen local ownership and sustainability.

Technology and Innovation

+ **IP Rights Reform & Access to Technology:** Reforming IP frameworks to allow technology licensing, local adaptation, and collaborative innovation in renewables (e.g., solar panels, batteries). → This supports local manufacturing, reduces dependency, and encourages domestic innovation ecosystems.

+ **Youth Training, Education, and R&D Ecosystems:** Investment in technical and vocational education, higher education and entrepreneurship programs targeting youth to build Africa's green tech workforce. → Mobilizes human capital for industrial development and ensures intergenerational transition leadership.

+ **South-South Knowledge Transfer & Institutional Partnerships:** Partnerships between African and other Global South countries (e.g., Morocco as a green tech hub) to develop engineering and manufacturing capacity. → Accelerates learning and local capability building.

Africa has the opportunity to lead a continental and global renewables-based energy transformation.

A vision for an irreversible path toward a 100 % renewable energy future

The potential for a different energy future is clear and increasingly urgent. With numerous energy goals and visions, abundant RE resources, including solar, wind, hydro, and geothermal, as well as vast reserves of critical minerals vital for the global energy transition[6] Africa has the opportunity to lead a continental and global renewables-based energy transformation.

Renewables-based energy transformation promises to deliver significant socio-economic and climate benefits to countries across Africa[7]. By embracing renewables as the foundation of its development, the continent can unlock extensive socio-economic and climate advantages, including increased energy access, job creation, and strengthened energy sovereignty. This transition not only drives green industrialization but also boosts climate resilience and overall well-being. Guided by bold visions such as Agenda 2063[8], initiatives like Mission 300[9], and global commitments like SDG 7[10], and with support from the international community, Africa can establish an irreversible path toward a 100 % renewable energy future, placing clean energy at the heart of its social and economic transformation.

Pathways Toward a Successful Renewable Energy Transformation in Africa by 2030

As the cases[11] Kenya, Morocco, South Africa, and Namibia have shown, Africa's desirable energy future will not be achieved by one targeted action, but multiple interconnected and reinforcing pathways, spanning energy access, large-scale renewable energy deployment, and green industrialization. These complementary and interconnected short (1–3 years) and medium-term (5-year) pathways can ultimately culminate in the success of Africa's renewable energy transformation by 2030, defined here as:

1. Energy Access
2. Renewable Energy Deployment
3. Green Industrialization

1. Energy Access

Countries are moving toward an irreversible path to 100 % energy access, with households and businesses rapidly adopting decentralized renewable energy. This transition supports social, economic, and climate justice while ensuring a reliable and sufficient energy supply aligned with citizens' purchasing power. Access to energy is also being leveraged to enhance Africa's social and economic productivity, promote value-added goods and services, and improve overall quality of life.

Short-term dynamic:
accelerated decentralised RE uptake by households, agriculture, and SMEs.

Reinforcing feedback loop:
As individuals, farmers, and SMEs adopt decentralised solar and renewable solutions, they directly experience lower electricity costs, improved reliability, and greater autonomy. These feedback loops are already evident in countries such as Pakistan, where a widespread adoption of solar PVs by households and businesses has been documented[12]. Positive lived experiences with RE can strengthen public trust in renewable technologies, shift narratives from dependency and extractivism toward African agency and ecological justice, and generate growing societal momentum for renewable energy. Rising public demand and political interest then create additional incentives for governments and utilities to scale decentralised energy solutions, further accelerating uptake. Over time, these dynamics can shape societal priorities across African countries, reinforcing political and policy commitments to universal energy access.

2. Renewable Energy Deployment

Countries are on an irreversible path towards 100 % renewable energy-based systems and large-scale development, upgrade, and modernization of storage and grid infrastructure, development of utility-scale renewable energy projects across the continent that are intentionally designed to power productive centers such as value addition manufacturing, commercial enterprises, agro–value chains and other competitive enterprises and services that create high-paying jobs with competitive and inclusive incomes.

Short-term dynamics:
storage and grid infrastructure are improved or developed; utility-scale renewable energy projects are under construction and deployment.

Reinforcing feedback loop:
Upgrading storage and grid infrastructure initiates a reinforcing cycle that accelerates renewable energy deployment. Modern transmission and distribution networks, supported by smart technologies and regional interconnections, can integrate larger shares of variable renewable energy. This improved grid flexibility allows storage systems to operate efficiently, enhancing reliability and reducing outages. As storage expands, overall system stability increases, making it easier and cheaper to add additional solar, wind, and other renewable sources. With more renewable generation feeding a stable grid, electricity costs decline, and access expands, enabling households and productive sectors to benefit from reliable, affordable energy. These visible improvements shift public perceptions: renewable energy becomes associated with economic opportunity, reduced dependency on fossil imports, and greater national agency. As positive experiences accumulate, public and political support for renewables strengthens, creating a mandate for further investment in grid upgrades, storage, and utility-scale projects. This reinforces the cycle, driving continued system modernisation and accelerating the transition toward a renewable energy future.

3. Green Industrialization

Countries are on an irreversible path towards green, renewable-based industrial development where green industrialization drives jobs and value creation, though, for example, green value chain development, green steel, transportation (batteries, EVs), agriculture, manufacturing of value-added goods, and a green service industry.

Short-term dynamic:
early industrial pilots—such as green steel, batteries, and electric vehicles—are being developed and tested.

Reinforcing feedback loop:
Pilot projects validate technologies, supply chains, and business models, demonstrating technical, commercial, and economic feasibility. Their success builds investor confidence and encourages policymakers to adopt supportive regulations and incentives. This, in turn, unlocks further capital, expands public interest, and enables replication and scaling. As more sectors adopt renewable-based industrial processes, economies of scale emerge, infrastructure expands, and labour and technological capabilities deepen. These reinforcing effects drive countries toward sustained green industrial development, cementing an irreversible shift from extractive structures toward value creation, technological sovereignty, and domestic resilience.

Interconnected System Dynamics

Across all three pathways, the reinforcing loops do not operate in isolation; they amplify one another and form a wider system of mutually strengthening dynamics.

Expanded energy access increases the number of households, farms, and small enterprises using renewable energy for productive purposes. As these users experience lower energy costs and improved reliability, their income and productivity rise, strengthening local purchasing power. Higher purchasing power, in turn, increases demand for modern energy services and creates a larger, more stable market for renewable electricity. This growing demand makes it easier for utilities and private developers to justify investments in new generation, storage, and grid infrastructure.

At the same time, modernised grids and falling renewable energy costs enable productive sectors, such as agro-processing, services, manufacturing, and logistics, to expand and diversify. When these sectors grow, they require more reliable, affordable, and high-quality electricity, further reinforcing the case for continued renewable energy deployment. As utility-scale projects come online and infrastructure upgrades progress, system-wide reliability improves, boosting public confidence and encouraging further decentralisation of energy solutions.

Green industrialisation deepens this momentum. As pilot projects in green steel, batteries, electric mobility, and renewable technology manufacturing succeed, they generate skilled jobs, technological capability, and domestic value addition. These benefits not only strengthen the economic argument for renewable energy but also create political momentum: governments gain incentives to support renewables because they deliver visible competitiveness, employment, and industrial growth. Industrial value chains that are now dependent on clean, affordable power, such as battery manufacturing or EV assembly, become influential constituencies advocating for stable, renewable-powered systems. Their growth reinforces demand for further grid upgrades and renewable generation.

Together, these mutually reinforcing dynamics create a virtuous cycle: greater access increases demand; improved infrastructure enables supply; industrialisation strengthens economic and political support; and the resulting benefits accelerate further action across all pillars. This system-wide interplay places Africa on a trajectory where renewable energy becomes not only a technological choice but the structural backbone of its social, economic, and ecological transformation.

These pathways ensure that Africa's renewable energy transformation is grounded in a strong social and economic foundation and narratives where supply and demand facilitate social and economic development and strengthen purchasing power, showcasing the value of RE energy. This approach supports long-term sustainability and enhances the quality of life for all Africans, in line with the visions outlined in Agenda 2026 and the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Civil Society Organizations can help to can help shift the system toward a self-reinforcing pathway.

What Civil Society Can Do to Kick-Start the Feedback Loops

Civil society can play a decisive catalytic role in activating the reinforcing feedback loops that drive Africa's renewable energy transformation. By bridging technical, financial, political, and narrative dimensions, organisations like Germanwatch and Bread for the World can help shift the system toward a self-reinforcing pathway where renewable energy access, large-scale deployment, and green industrialisation strengthen and accelerate one another.

A systems approach highlights that no single intervention is sufficient. Instead, civil society can act across multiple leverage points such as finance, policy, narratives, alliances, and legal accountability, to trigger virtuous cycles that build public demand, political incentives, investor confidence, and societal ownership of a RE-based transformation.

Key civil society contributions to activate the loops:

+ **Integrate finance and energy expertise** to shape conditions for scalable uptake, reforming subsidies, de-risking investments, mobilising domestic resources, and strengthening the role of local banks to finance low-income households and low-revenue markets. This alignment closes the gap between technical potential and financial reality, enabling early adoption and wider diffusion.

+ **Build a supportive coalition in Europe** to push for a coherent, holistic programme that combines political, economic, and financial market reforms in support of African countries, thereby aligning external enabling conditions with Africa's renewable energy ambitions.

+ **Strategically map global actors and cooperation models** (EU, China, India, oil-rich states) to identify partnerships that genuinely advance African interests and avoid reinforcing extractive or dependency-based dynamics. This strengthens Africa's agency and shapes a more equitable global context for the transition.

+ **Strengthen solidarity with African civil society** by amplifying African-led narratives, supporting advocacy, and countering fossil-fuel interests. This helps shift public and political narratives toward renewable, inclusive, and sovereign development trajectories, essential triggers for the feedback loops.

+ **Support strategic energy and climate litigation and accountability efforts** that challenge fossil fuel subsidies, harmful projects, and violations of international law. Legal victories can reshape incentives, dismantle fossil lock-in, and accelerate policy shifts toward renewables.

+ **Expand civic engagement and policy influence** by building the capacity of local CSOs and citizens to advocate for equitable access, fair financing, and effective use of local resources. This strengthens bottom-up demand and political accountability.

+ **Facilitate cross-continental CSO alliances** to harmonize strategies, share knowledge, and build collective power for a people-centered transition—creating a transnational reinforcing loop of learning, legitimacy, and influence.

+ **Co-design frameworks and narratives with African CSOs** to link renewable energy with transformative development, anchoring the transition in local priorities and ensuring policies respond to communities' social and economic needs.

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List of Abbreviations

AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
AfSEM	African Single Electricity Market
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
EA	Energy Access
EU	European Union
EVs	Electric Vehicles
GI	Green Industrialization
GW	Gigawatt
IEA	International Energy Agency
IRENA	International Renewable Energy Agency
NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions
RE	Renewable Energy
SB62	Subsidiary Body Session 62
SDG 7	Sustainable Development Goal 7
SMEs	Small and Medium sized Enterprises
ToC	Theory of Change
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNSD	United Nations Statistics Division
WHO	World Health Organization
World Bank	World Bank

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