

Interconnected mini-grids: A key component of Africa's energy future?

Q&A list

#	Question	Answers
1	How to become a member of AMG-CoP?	Please feel free to email me at josh@southsouthnorth.org , and I will engage with you on this
2	Is AfLP engaged with the Race to Zero Campaign?	Hi. Yes, we are... as part of the LEADS Global Partnership
3	Can we have a mix combination of both IMG and Off-grid mini-grids in a solution?	A mix of solutions will be needed to reach universal access involving grid extension, stand-alone systems, interconnected mini-grids and off-grid mini-grids. The appropriate mix and its evolution will vary from country-to-country and based on an integrated plan.
4	Merci bien.Veuillez partager les presentations aux participants. Please sharing presentation	avec plaisir.. toutes les presentations seront partagees a tous les participants d'ici quelques jours. voici le lien: https://www.cleancookingalliance.org
5	Does IRENA have training programs, particularly on energy/gender the analysis on job creation and entrepreneurship and similar trainings?	Thank you for your question. You may keep keep track of IRENA training programs here: https://irena.org/events We undertake extensive analysis on gender and jobs. You will find our analysis on these topics here: https://irena.org/benefits
6	What is the driver for talking about interconnected mini-grids, while off-grid mini-grids are still not seriously taking off due to regulatory obstacles?	I believe there is alot of interventions that are required to strengthen regulatory frameworks in Africa and in addition encourage countries that are yet to develop regulations to embark on this exercise which is key consideration in enhancing bankability of the mini-grid space. However there is merit for interconnected mini-grids in instances where grid power is not adequate, this explains why IMG are under pilot in Nigeria.
7	Philippines example is about a failure. IRENA cannot keep talking about 'general' stuff....they should go down and work actively with governments to enable real mini-grids to be rolled out.	Thank you for your feedback. Would be great to hear your perspectives about the Philippines experience and others in the region. Happy to get in touch over email.
8	Can Irena partner or invest in the establishment of Mini-grids with local authorities to provide power where the national grid is not available	Thank you for your question. IRENA does not invest directly in projects, however you may check the Climate Investment Platform (https://www.irena.org/irenaforcip) for details on our work on project facilitation.
9	How can interconnected mini-grids help increase electrification as they can only be set in places where the grid is already present?	They can increase connections where grid is already present (e.g., often local enterprise access rates can be lower than residential). Plus, utilities may choose to deploy interconnected mini-grids to connect areas at the fringe of their networks particularly in less dense areas.
10	How to become a member of AMDA? We contacted them, but did not get any response.....months ago.	Contact us via communications@africamda.org , we look forward to having a conversation with you.
11	Development financing institutions (DFIs) should stop financing expansion of national grids to reach minigrid areas. It is wrong and not smart. Lots of losses. DFI's have their own interests to push loans through the throat of governments. Let private sector do the job and DFIs can support governments to prepare and execute proper policies and regulations for private sector engagement.	I agree with your sentiments. I believe intergrated national plans and transparency in following through those plans is important in shaping minigrid development in Africa. Exclusivity of sites and lack of encroachment on concessions should be key considerations by lenders. Intergrated mini-grids in the future will be useful in bridging the divide in urban and peri urban areas that lack quality access to power. Happy to continue with the conversation.
12	Hasn't Ethiopia put some MG policies in place?	I believe that this should be in development, World Bank are currently looking at Ethiopia for a pilot program and this will be rolled out soon.
13	How different is a mini-grid from distributed power generation?	Mini-Grids are a type of decentralized power generation, decentralized power systems can be in the form of C&I power captive power, intergrated mini-grids and offgrid mini-grids.
14	How does a private sector connect with AMDA? Secondly, the mini-grid initiated in Nigeria, what is the source of energy? Solar? or is there another source of energy? Thirdly, what is the viability of mini-grids using biogas?	Thank you for your question , for your first question kindly Contact us via communications@africamda.org
15	Does the Federal government of Nigeria have any plans of limiting the number of fossil-fuel based mini-grids within the country especially bearing in mind it carbon print?	The FGN is promoting the use of solar hybrid minigrids as a cleaner source of energy and towards ensuring reliability and sustainability of power supply.
16	Can Anita speak to the recently commisioned solar home system by the Vice President of Nigeria, I'm yet to see a sample of what it looks like and what it can power?	The Vice President recently commissioned the deployment of 1000 solar home systems under the FGN's Solar Power Naija/5 Million Solar Connections Programme. This programme provides loan interest loan facilities to private sector minigrid developers, solar home system suppliers, as well as manufacturers of the components of these solar power solutions. The solar home systems which were commissioned are plug and play systems from 80W, with solar panels, light bulbs, a fan and for the higher range system, TVs.
17	Can REA intervene/assist in discussions with the DisCos on the Tripartite Agreement especially those already under IMAS.	Sure. REA is keen on seeing to the success of IMGs and to ensure the enabling environment is there, it is happy to assist where reasonably possible.

18	I got a bit confused with the interchange of mini-grid and interconnected mini-grids during your presentation. Are IMGs now possible in Nigeria? and if so, please comment on the approach to its net metering / feed-in tariff to the grid. Also how is this managed adequately considering your initially slide that show a significant gap between generation and distribution... with the national grid challenges, how does / will IMG work out on ground?	Yes IMGs are possible in Nigeria. The requirements to be met are provided for in the Minigrid regulation.
19	Where should these subsidies be targetted? End-users or IPPs?	Effectively the tariff - end users : in my view this should be CAPEX oriented - but the reality is that the tariff expectation sometimes is so low that OPEX subsidies would also be needed (very difficult to sustain)
20	How do we make Mini-Grids commercially viable to increase private sector participation, without making electricity unaffordable for electricity customers.	Prosper I believe viability gap funds, derisking tools for mini-grids i.e. guarantees which could be in the form of minimum revenue guarantee, local currency guarantees. In addition subsidies are required to bridge the cost, utilities are highly subsidized which is reflected in the cost of service.
21	What are the key challenges with regard to policy and enabling environment in African countries, what can countries like Ethiopia learn from Uganda and Nigeria?	I believe having specific mini-grid regulatory framework that incentivizes private sector participation is necessary. In addition having regulations that can scale i.e moving away from individual site approvals to aggregation is key. Clear grid arrival rules that enhance complementarity of grid and mini grid should be considered.
22	Whats the government doing to support with regards the scarcity of forex, bearing in mind that the equipment are been imported?	Under Solar Power Naija, loan facilities with very low interest rates, are being provided to support the construction and operation of manufacturing plants in country. This will allow for equipment to be purchased in country, using naira.