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Insights & Perspectives

Africa's Green Energy Transition: Unlocking Potential Ownership and Strategy

Editorial | **Elfreda Hukpati**

The global energy transition is not unfolding uniformly. Each country faces a distinct set of opportunities and challenges shaped by the presence of clean energy actors, the maturity of domestic capital markets, and access to international financing. For African countries, these dynamics are further influenced by the continent's resource endowment and the ability of the private sector and institutional investors to engage meaningfully in green energy development. This means Africa cannot simply replicate strategies from elsewhere but must tailor its own path to the clean energy transition.

Africa holds nearly one-third of the world's reserves of critical minerals; resources that are indispensable to clean energy technologies such as solar panels, wind turbines, and electric vehicle batteries. This places the continent at the very center of the global clean energy transition. Yet, to turn this potential into prosperity, African countries must start with the basics by investing in comprehensive geological data. Establishing the scale, type, and technological relevance of these minerals will provide the foundation for a coherent green minerals strategy. Such a strategy should go beyond simply cataloging resources. It should identify competitive advantages along the value chain whether in supplying raw materials, building processing facilities, or fostering downstream technological development. This will help African countries not only attract investors but also determine how best to capture long-term value.

Additionally, unlocking Africa's mineral wealth responsibly requires more than geological surveys. Strong governance frameworks and an enabling investment climate are essential to draw partners with both capital and expertise. Clear rules, transparency, and accountability will reassure investors while ensuring communities benefit from resource development. At the same time, Africa must avoid repeating the mistakes of past resource booms, where wealth was drained through raw exports with little local benefit. The continent must move decisively from mere extraction to value addition, building industries that process minerals, manufacture components, and drive innovation at home.

Moreover, the diversity of Africa's mineral base offers opportunities for regional cooperation that can amplify impact. Linking complementary resources across borders could strategically position the continent in global value chains. For example, combining Ghana's lithium reserves with Togo's phosphate could place West Africa at the center of the battery industry—an industry expected to drive demand for decades. Similar collaborations could unlock new regional markets, foster industrialisation, and increase Africa's bargaining power in the global transition.

For the energy transition to be transformative, Africans themselves must be more than resource providers. They must be owners of investment, innovation, and value creation. This means deliberately creating space for domestic investors, entrepreneurs, and innovators to lead. Africa's youth, in particular, must be recognised as central actors. With their creativity, technological savvy, and demographic strength, young Africans are uniquely positioned to shape the continent's green economy. A portion of both national and international climate finance should therefore be reserved for youth-led initiatives, guaranteeing their active participation in building Africa's future.

Africa's role in the global clean energy transition will be defined not just by the minerals it holds, but by the strategies it adopts. With strong governance, smart regional cooperation, and deliberate investment in youth-driven innovation, Africa can move beyond resource dependence toward sustainable, inclusive growth.

Program/Event Highlight

Clean Cooking Ethanol Hackathon

October 20, 2025 | ACEP Office, North Legon



Cooking is essential to life. Beyond culture and tradition, it is fundamentally about health, dignity, and well-being. Yet across the sub-region, millions of households continue to rely on polluting cooking fuels, exposing families to dangerous levels of Household Air Pollution (HAP). Biomass use remains one of the leading contributors to indoor air pollution, with disproportionate health impacts on women and children who spend the most time around cooking spaces.

Clean cooking solutions offer a powerful pathway to improved public health, reduced environmental degradation, and enhanced livelihoods. Clean cookstoves significantly reduce smoke exposure, lower the burden of respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, and improve overall household well-being. For many communities, access to clean cooking also means time saved, reduced fuel costs, and greater economic opportunities, particularly for women.

In line with this commitment, ACEP's Clean Cooking Hackathon on Ethanol challenged young innovators to design ethanol-based cookstoves that can accelerate clean cooking adoption across the sub-region. The initiative highlights the critical role young Africans can play in developing practical, locally driven solutions that improve livelihoods while advancing climate and energy goals.

Clean cooking connects health, gender equity, energy access, and climate action in a single development pathway. By reducing household air pollution, it improves health outcomes for women and children, strengthens livelihoods, and expands access to modern energy while lowering emissions from biomass use. Supporting youth-led innovation in clean cooking therefore enables simultaneous progress on well-being, equity, and sustainability across the sub-region.

Out of 18 teams who submitted applications to participate in the clean cooking hackathon, 8 were selected to submit prototype design after which two progressed to the final stage of implementation which required them to manufacture the cooking stoves.

Shaping Africa's Energy Future: Reflections from the NextGen Resource Governance Leaders Cohort 9 Policy Seminar

November 12, 2025 | ACEP Office, North Legon



The policy seminar of the Next Gen Resource Governance Leaders Cohort 9 marked a significant milestone in the journey of a new generation of African thinkers and practitioners committed to transforming governance across the continent. Designed as a capstone experience of the internship program, the seminar brought to life the program's core objective: bridging theory with real-world application while equipping participants with the multidisciplinary skills and analytical depth needed to tackle complex governance challenges.

At its heart, the internship program seeks to build a strong pipeline of young pan-African leaders; individuals who are not only technically sound but also capable of innovative thinking and practical problem-solving. Through a structured capacity development process and an enabling learning environment, participants are nurtured to engage critically with policy issues and contribute meaningfully to sustainable governance pathways.

Cohort 9 reflected this vision in both diversity and depth, bringing together participants from Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Ghana, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. This cross-country representation enriched discussions, offering comparative perspectives and grounding policy debates in varied national contexts.

The seminar featured three group presentations, each addressing pressing issues at the intersection of natural resource governance, energy, and sustainability – green transition, energy justice and clean cooking access across Africa.

Beyond the presentations, what stood out most was the intellectual growth demonstrated by the participants. The seminar was not just a showcase of research outputs, but a reflection of transformation of young leaders sharpening their critical thinking, deepening their policy analysis skills, and confidently engaging with complex governance issues.



Program/Event Highlight

ACEP engages NMA, SLEITI, NRA and the Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources and NACE on Optimizing Revenue from Dimension Stones in Sierra Leone

December, 1 -2, 2025 | Freetown, Sierra Leone



On 1st and 2nd of December, 2025 we engaged key institutions in Sierra Leone's mining sector, including the Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources, the National Minerals Agency, the National Revenue Authority, the Sierra Leone Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (SLEITI), the National Advocacy Coalition on Extractives (NACE), and Media representatives in Freetown, Sierra Leone.

The engagement focused on identifying practical pathways for addressing illicit financial flows (IFFs) within the industrial minerals sector, particularly dimension stones.

The two days workshop highlighted how the use of remote monitoring technologies can be adopted to improve accuracy in production volumes, which is essential for proper tax application. There were also key discussions around the need to explore opportunities for promoting value addition to industrial minerals particularly dimension stones in order to drive socio-economic development in Sierra Leone.

The sessions concluded with a concrete blueprint designed to strengthen governance of the dimension stone sector and improve domestic revenue mobilisation for Sierra Leone's broader socio-economic growth.

ACEP and Solar Taxi Partner to Empower Young Women through Green Skills Development

December, 10, 2025 | ACEP Office, North Legon



On 10th December, 2025, the Africa Centre for Energy Policy (ACEP) and SolarTaxi officially signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to launch the Green Energy Technology Capacity Development Program (GET-CADEP)—a forward-looking initiative set to commence next year. This partnership marks a significant step toward equipping young African women with practical, industry-relevant green skills needed for the future of work.

As the global energy landscape rapidly shifts toward cleaner, technology-driven systems, the demand for green skills is no longer optional but essential. From renewable energy deployment to sustainable mobility and energy efficiency, these skills are critical for enhancing competitiveness, driving inclusion, and supporting long-term sustainable development across the continent.

Thus, GET-CADEP is designed to bridge the long-standing gap between policy and practice by connecting training directly with industry needs. Through this initiative, participants will gain hands-on experience, technical knowledge, and exposure to real-world applications within the renewable energy sector. More importantly, the program places a deliberate focus on empowering young women, an often underrepresented group in the energy space, by creating pathways for their active participation and leadership in the green economy.

This collaboration between ACEP and SolarTaxi reflects a shared commitment to expanding access to decent green jobs while strengthening Africa's capacity to meet its energy transition goals. The initiative is laying the foundation for a more inclusive and resilient energy future by investing in skills development today.

Courtesy Visit by Nigeria's Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission

December, 12, 2025 | ACEP Office, North Legon



On 12th December 2025, a high-level delegation from Nigeria's Revenue Mobilization, Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC), led by Mr. Ntufam Eyo Isa Whiley—a statesman and former Commissioner of RMAFC—paid a courtesy visit to the Africa Centre for Energy Policy (ACEP).

The visit created a valuable platform for both institutions to engage in forward-looking discussions on innovative and sustainable strategies to strengthen revenue mobilisation in Nigeria. Conversations focused particularly on the role of the extractive and energy sectors in boosting public revenue, improving fiscal governance, and enhancing transparency and accountability in resource management.

The delegation also explored how ACEP's technical expertise and policy research could support RMAFC's mandate, especially in addressing emerging challenges within Nigeria's fiscal landscape. Key areas of interest included strengthening institutional capacity, improving data-driven decision-making, and aligning revenue strategies with broader economic and development priorities.

Beyond immediate policy discussions, the engagement opened up avenues for deeper collaboration between ACEP and RMAFC. Both parties identified opportunities for joint initiatives in capacity building, knowledge exchange, and policy engagement, aimed at fostering more effective and inclusive fiscal governance systems.

Upcoming

Introducing *Blindspot Africa* Podcast

Blindspot Africa

Africa Centre for Energy Policy is excited to announce the launch of ***Blindspot Africa*** Podcast, a new platform created to simplify and unpack some of the most complex issues in Africa's energy and extractive sectors. Too often, conversations about energy and natural resources are framed in highly technical language, leaving many people disconnected from the policies and decisions that directly affect their lives. The Blindspot aims to change that by shining a light on the overlooked areas—the “blind spots” that deserve more public attention.

Africa's energy and extractive sectors sit at the heart of the continent's development journey and its role in the global energy transition. Yet, many critical issues from access to power and governance of natural resources to climate finance and youth participation often remain underexplored in public debate. The Blindspot fills this gap by breaking down these complex issues in plain language, encouraging informed dialogue, and empowering audiences to engage more meaningfully with policies that affect their future.

Delivered in a conversational, informative, and relatable style, the podcast will make technical policy discussions accessible to all. Its goal is to bridge the gap between expert analysis and everyday understanding, helping listeners see how decisions in the energy and extractive sectors shape opportunities, livelihoods, and development across the continent.

The podcast is designed for a diverse audience: policymakers, researchers, civil society actors, media professionals, students, industry players, and everyday citizens who want to better understand Africa's energy story. Whether you're crafting policy, reporting on developments, advocating for communities, or simply curious about the forces shaping Africa's future, The Blindspot offers fresh insights and practical takeaways.

Stay tuned for the first episode of The Blindspot where we bring clarity to complexity and turn blind spots into conversations.

[#blindspotafrica](https://twitter.com/blindspotafrica)

Explore the podcast on the various platforms by clicking the icons below:



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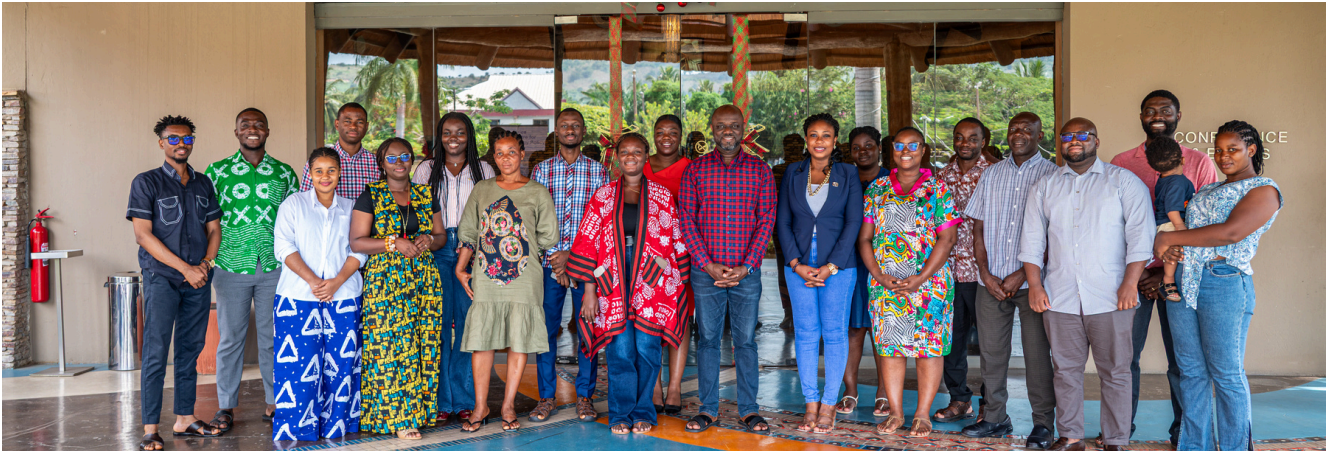


Spotify



Buzzsprout

Reflecting on Progress, Learning from Challenges and Charting the Path Ahead



ACEP held its Annual Review Meeting and Staff Retreat, bringing together team members to reflect on the past year, celebrate achievements, assess challenges, and collectively plan for the future.

Grounded in ACEP's core values of professionalism, accountability, credibility, integrity, knowledge, and independence, the retreat provided an important opportunity to take stock of our work and its impact. Over the course of the sessions, staff reviewed key milestones and contributions made across our programmes, particularly in shaping policy discourse, promoting accountability, and advancing sustainable energy and governance outcomes.

The discussions also created space for honest reflection on challenges encountered during the year. The team was able to identify lessons learned and explore practical ways to improve performance, strengthen collaboration, and enhance impact.

Beyond reviewing the past, the retreat focused on the future. Staff engaged in strategic discussions on priorities for the coming year, opportunities for growth, and innovative approaches to addressing emerging governance and energy challenges.

As ACEP continues its mission of advancing evidence-based policy engagement and accountability, the Annual Review Meeting serves as a reminder of the importance of reflection, learning, and collective action. The insights gained and commitments made during the retreat will help guide our efforts as we work towards achieving even greater impact in the year ahead.



Africa Centre for Energy Policy

- 📍 26 Lemming St. || North Legon || GM-058-1968
- 📮 P. O. Box CT 2121 || Cantonments || Accra
- ☎ +233 (0) 302 900 730
- ✉ info@acep.africa
- 🌐 acep.africa

ACEP is a thought leader in Africa's energy and extractives governance space, working towards improving economic transformation and inclusive sustainable development. We contribute to developing alternative and innovative policy interventions through high-quality research, analysis, and advocacy in Africa's energy and extractives sector.