

Bamako energy storage policy updates

WASHINGTON, June 23, 2023 -The World Bank has approved \$157 million in financing from the International Development Association (IDA)* to help Mali improve the reliability and efficiency of the electricity system, increase access to electricity in selected project areas and facilitate the integration of renewable energy.

"Yelen Sira"s investments will have an immediate impact on the quality and cost of electricity services in Mali," says Clara de Sousa, World Bank Country Director for Mali. "By leveraging technological developments in off-grid electrification and business models, the project is creating economic opportunities and improving access to social services such as health, education, cold storage, and solar water pumping in remote areas," she adds.

The project has received \$43 million in co-financing from the Green Climate Fund (\$38 million in credits and \$5 million in grants), which was mobilized under the World Bank"s Sustainable Renewables Risk Mitigation Initiative (SRMI). The Energy Sector Management Assistance Program (ESMAP) is also providing \$1 million in grant funding, bringing the total project financing to \$201 million.

The World Bank Group plays a key role in the development and implementation of Mali"s energy access agenda. It works closely with the donors and technical partners in Mali to ensure that the respective commitments complement and reinforce each other. This coordinated approach will be used to implement the Electricity System Reinforcement and Access Expansion Project.

*The International Development Association (IDA) is the World Bank"s fund for the poorest. Established in 1960, it provides grants and low- to zero-interest loans for projects and programs that boost economic growth, reduce poverty and improve poor people"s lives. IDA is one of the largest sources of assistance for the world"s 76 poorest countries, 39 of which are in Africa. Resources from IDA bring positive change to 1.6 billion people. Since 1960, IDA has supported development work in 113 countries. Annual commitments have averaged about \$21 billion over the last three years, with about 61% going to Africa.

The authorities in Mali have revealed plans to build a 200 MW solar plant with backing from Russia.

Image: Aboodi Vesakaran, Unsplash

The government of Mali has announced the construction of a 200 MW solar plant on 314 hectares in the southwestern part of the country. The Sanankoroba solar plant will be built by Russia"s Novawind, which is the renewable energy division of nuclear group Rosatom.

Rosatom will build the plant for around XOF 120 billion (\$198.6 million), with construction expected to last a

year. Mali's transitional government, led by Colonel Assimi Goita, has signed a 20-year operation agreement, with the Malian Ministry of Energy to assume control of the project after 10 years.

In October 2023, Mali and Russia agreed to develop civil nuclear power, according to Voice of America (VOA). The construction of two additional 200 MW solar power plants near Bamako is set to begin on May 28 and June 1.

The electricity sector in Mali heavily relies on imported fossil fuels for thermal production. A May 2023 report by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) stated that in 2020, Mali had a production capacity of 1,024.92 MW, including 162 MW from self-producers - all thermal. Electricity production stood 2,577.44 GWh, comprising 69% thermal energy, 26.8% hydroelectricity, and 4.2% solar.

According to the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), the country had an installed PV capacity of approximately 97 MW at the end of 2023.

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