

*“Innovation as the key enabler
to power Africa”*



RES4MED 5th Annual Conference Conference Brief

Renewable energy as a strategy for Africa’s economic growth. Access to clean, affordable and reliable energy services is fundamental to drive sustainable economic growth in Africa. Deploying renewable energy solutions is one of the most effective strategies to enable access to electricity, grow businesses and improve livelihoods. Because Africa’s energy challenges are so diverse, a mix of large-scale projects, decentralized solutions, and grid enhancements will be key to unlocking the continent’s sustainable economic transformation and sustainable development. Renewable energy technologies can reap significant benefits in terms of job creation, energy security, climate change mitigation and adaptation, food & water production, poverty reduction and business creation. Pursuant to its mission, RES4MED supports African countries’ clean energy transition through initiatives such as studies on the integration of non-programmable renewable energy in the national electric system of Algeria and Kenya, as well as studies on job creation of the renewables industry in Tunisia and Algeria.

Fostering a versatile environment for investment. Scaling investments for the roll-out of large scale and decentralised renewable energy projects in Africa requires clear and stable policy and regulatory frameworks, based on long-term planning and competitive mechanism schemes, such as auctions and PPAs. Off-grid renewable energy solutions require sustainable business models and capacity building programs to enhance local ownership, enable operations & maintenance for project durability, and contribute to skill-building for nascent renewable energy job markets. In that light, RES4MED is setting up a “Micro-Grid Academy” in collaboration with Kenya Power & Lighting Company (KPLC) that functions as a capacity building platform for young professionals to learn how to plan, design, build and operate a hybrid micro-grid in remote areas through a 10-30 kW off-grid hybrid power plant in Nairobi, Kenya.

Innovative solutions for a dynamic continent. Energy sector players seeking market opportunities in Africa need to disrupt business-as-usual thinking and integrate a strong focus on sustainability and innovation. Thanks to the continent's dynamic economic growth, its young population, its renewable energy abundance, a growing entrepreneurial start-up culture and enabling digital technologies, the right elements are in place to enable sustainable economic development. By applying innovative thinking to local challenges with technology as a stepping stone, new markets are revealed for Africa's economic take-off. In 2017, RES4MED aims to highlight the importance of innovation by making it the central theme of its 5th Annual Conference.

The way forward. Achieving inclusive and sustainable economic development in Africa will rely on the integration of innovation and sustainability enabled through partnerships for change. The way forward involves matching innovative technological solutions, sustainable business models and capable players through strategic partnerships to scale up investments into projects and initiatives that deliver clean, affordable and reliable electricity to African communities and businesses. Renewable energy solutions, innovation and sustainability need to be integrated in a holistic and cross-sectoral manner connecting energy, health, business, education, technology and environment. In light of this vision, RES4MED will expand its thematic focus towards sustainability in 2018.