

# Jobs for Youth in Africa











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## Foreword

Africa is a land of tremendous wealth and enormous untapped potential. We are a young continent. Today, we have 420 million young people aged 15 to 35. By 2050, the numbers are expected to double to almost 830 million. Each year, ten to twelve million young Africans join the job market.

Today, thousands of young African men and women resort to desperate means via dangerous treks through the Sahara Desert and rickety boats in the Mediterranean, in search of jobs, a livelihood, and a better future.

Visionary leadership suggests that we must do things differently if we are to anticipate different outcomes in the not-to-distant future.

At the African Development Bank, we are laser-focused on our commitment to build the capacity of our young people. We also have a responsibility to turn Africa's largest demographic asset into an economic dividend.

In conjunction with our many partners and donors, we are working across the continent in 54-member nations to reduce economic and social threats that deprive young men and women of opportunities.

Jobs for Youth in Africa is simply about strategically creating millions of jobs and investing in our youth today, to ensure that tomorrow, a dynamic and prosperous Africa becomes a reality.

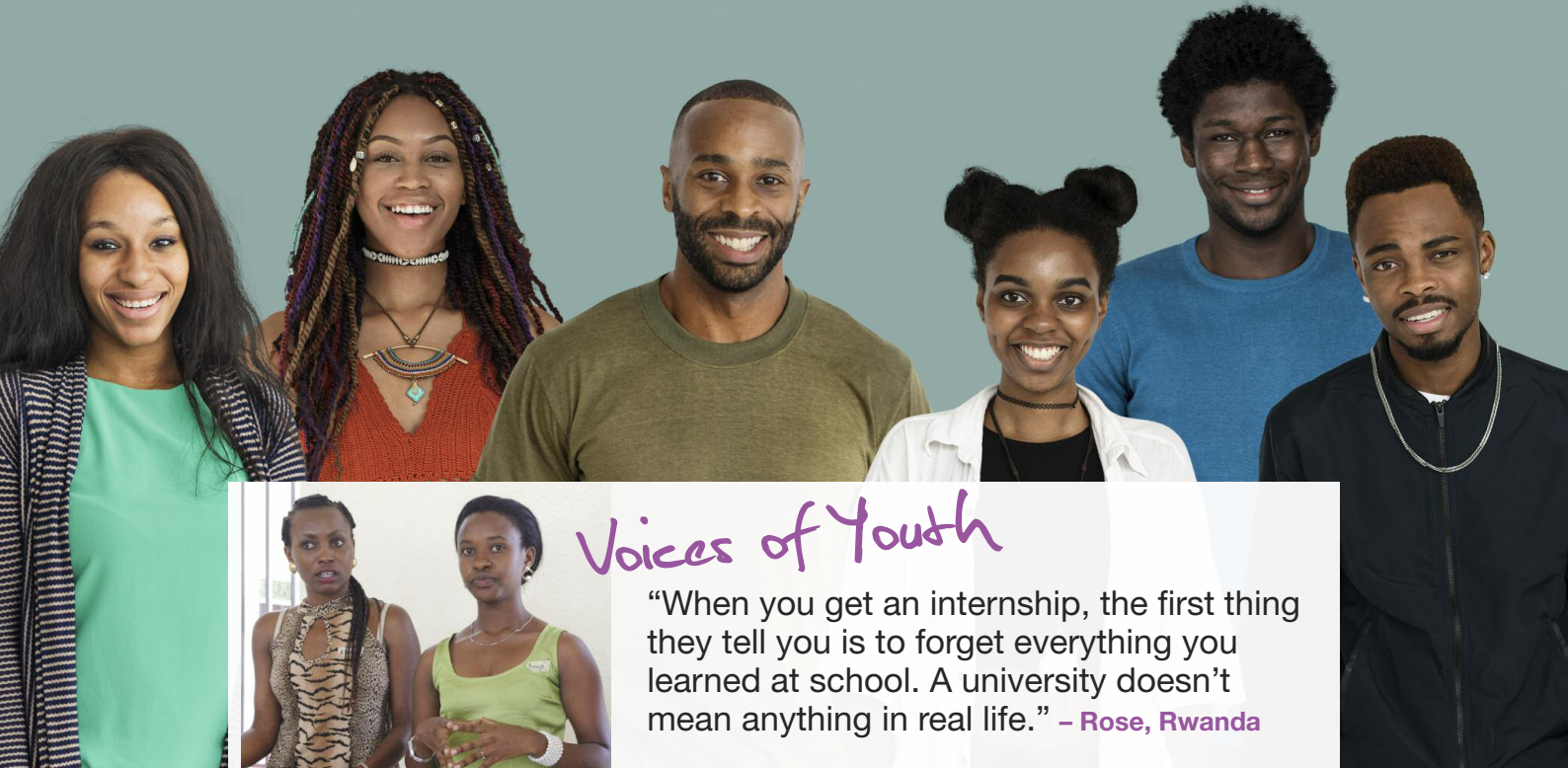
I invite you to join us in this very achievable goal.







# Why Jobs for Youth in Africa?



## Voices of Youth

“When you get an internship, the first thing they tell you is to forget everything you learned at school. A university doesn’t mean anything in real life.” – **Rose, Rwanda**

**A**frica’s greatest asset is its youth. Africa’s population is 1.2 billion and is projected to more than double by 2050, when it will comprise one-fourth of the world’s population. Africa will remain the world’s youngest region, with the median age of the population under 25 years old. If properly harnessed, this growing working age population could drive Africa’s economic transformation.

However, the opportunity is in danger of being lost. The majority of youth do not have secure work or an economic future. Of the 420 million youth aged between 15 and 35 in Africa today, the majority are unemployed, have insecure jobs or are in casual employment. On average, the unemployment rate for youth is roughly double that for adults. Significant variations do, however, occur across African countries.

The challenge is multifaceted. Ten to 12 million youth come on to the job market every year but only three million formal jobs are created annually. The lack of waged jobs pushes youth into the informal sector, where jobs are typically less stable and have lower earning potential. Women seeking both formal and informal jobs are particularly affected, often facing even greater barriers to accessing opportunities: 35% of female youth are not in employment,

education, or training (NEET), compared with only 20% of men.

Youth in fragile states face additional challenges, with economic opportunities diminished by instability and lack of institutional capacity. The costs of unemployment are pervasive and severe. Long spells of youth unemployment or vulnerable employment permanently lower future productive potential and earnings, and individuals with limited incomes have restricted access to health and education services. Limited economic opportunities also fuel conflict and instability: 40% of people who join rebel movements worldwide are motivated by a lack of work.

It also causes extensive migration from the continent as young people seek a better life and to provide for their families at home. In 2015, 14% of international migrants worldwide were born in Africa. Moreover, the number of migrants from Africa increased by 2.7% each year from 2000 to 2015. Above all, youth unemployment constitutes a failure to capitalize on one of the continent’s greatest assets: its large and growing population of talented young people.

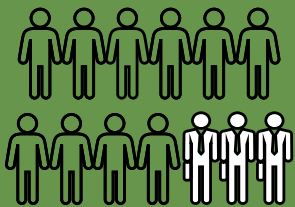
To try and slow this migration, it is necessary to improve the quality of life today and achieve inclusive growth. This means addressing the youth employment challenge.



**1.2 Billion** **420 Million**  
**PEOPLE** **YOUTH AGED 15-35**



**10-12 MILLION YOUTH  
ENTER THE JOB MARKET**



**EACH YEAR, ONLY 3 MILLION  
FIND FORMAL JOBS**



**36 OUT OF  
THE WORLD'S  
40 YOUNGEST  
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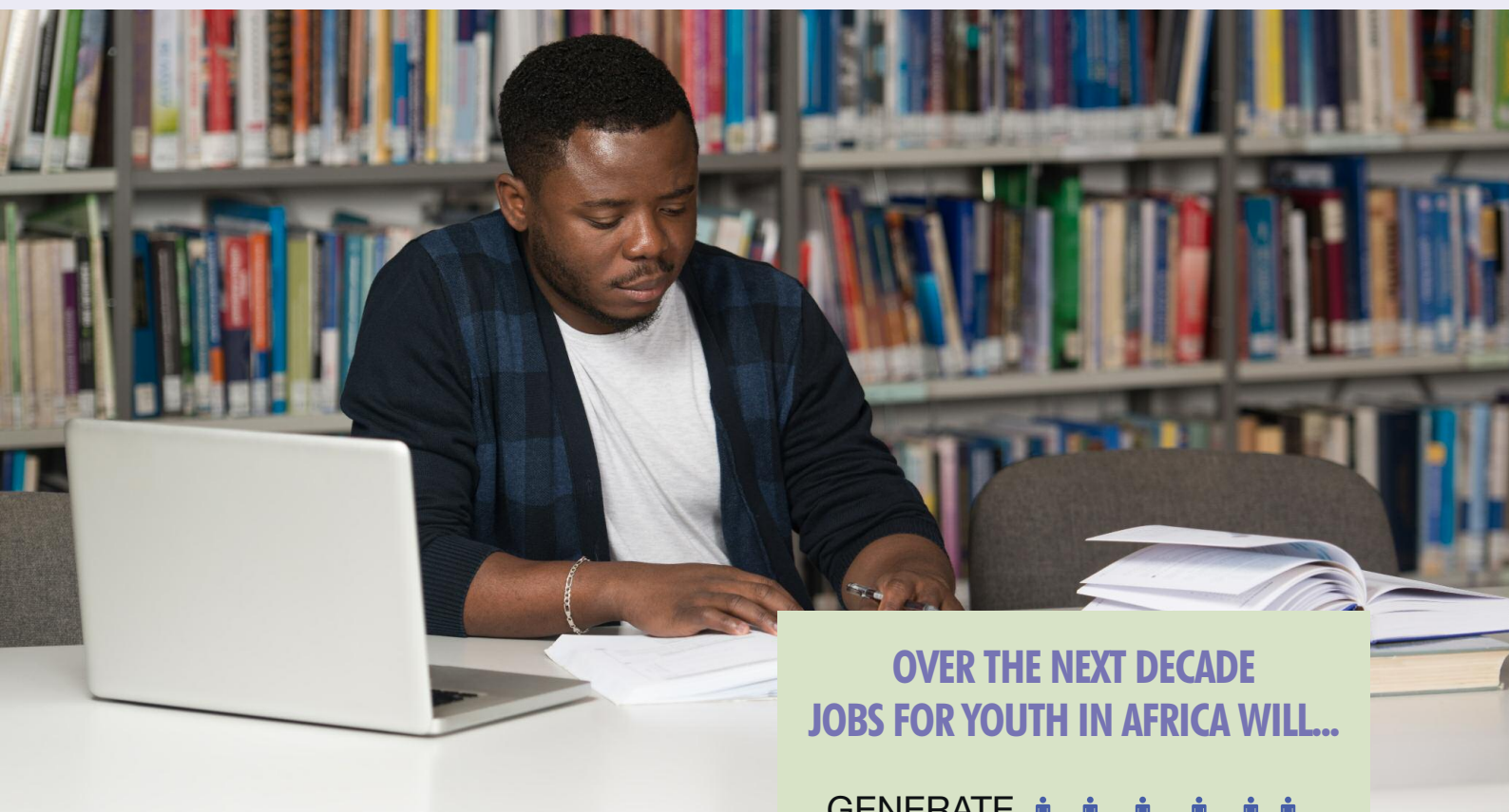
## **YOUTH VOICES**

"ITC in school is all basic,  
it's nothing that encourages  
creativity, it's not hands-on."

**- Hassan, Egypt**



# What is Jobs for Youth in Africa?



**J**obs for Youth in Africa (JfYA) is an initiative established to address the continent's youth employment challenge. Its aims are to expand employment opportunities, strengthen human capital, and build durable labor market linkages. It plans to create 25 million jobs and impact 50 million youth over the next decade.

Jobs for Youth in Africa involves collaboration between the African Development Bank (AfDB) and key partners in the public and private sectors across Africa. The AfDB is uniquely positioned to deliver on this agenda.

The Bank's engagement in its 54 regional member countries across Africa ensures that programming is aligned with country priorities and the needs of African youth.

The AfDB also has programmatic, financing, and research tools at its disposal - along with the convening power to bring together key actors to coordinate action. Partners will be involved at the national, regional, and continent-wide levels and will include African governments, private sector companies, civil society organizations, and regional bodies.

**OVER THE NEXT DECADE  
JOBS FOR YOUTH IN AFRICA WILL...**

**GENERATE  
25  
MILLION  
NEW JOBS**



**IMPACT  
50  
MILLION  
YOUTH**



While Jobs for Youth in Africa builds on other youth employment efforts and lessons learned, it is unique in adopting an ecosystem approach. It addresses interrelated supply, demand, and linkage challenges to youth employment, deploys a range of policy, research, programming, and investment interventions, and focuses on working with a broad coalition of partners. It also pays particular attention to female youth and youth in fragile states.

This will enable Jobs for Youth in Africa to bring coherence and scale to youth employment and entrepreneurship efforts across the continent.



“Agri-business training is really exciting and needed. To be successful it must emphasize modernization of agricultural techniques and enrich cooperatives to grow.”

– Rosine, Côte d’Ivoire



“To make the industrial apprenticeship program work, you must offer it during the university application delay. Get the students early when they are waiting for the university!.”

– Grace, Nigeria



A photograph of two young men, likely students or professionals, working together on a laptop. The man in the foreground is pointing at the screen, while the other looks on attentively. They are in a casual setting, possibly a classroom or a workshop.

# How will Jobs for Youth in Africa achieve this ambition?

## INTEGRATION

**Integration activities incorporate a youth employment focus into both the Bank's systems and its engagement with regional member countries**

Build the Bank's capacity to address job creation and employment through incorporation of youth employment considerations in monitoring and evaluation systems, Bank planning documents, and in Bank projects that have high employment potential.

Support countries throughout Africa in adopting policies and building institutions favorable to employment by elevating youth employment in strategic planning processes, guiding policy makers, and providing financial and technical assistance for policy reform and capacity development.

## INNOVATION

**Innovation activities incubate, assess, and scale promising policies and interventions**

Launch flagship programs across the continent: program models focused on Micro-, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) creation and skills development in high-priority sectors will be tailored to country contexts, implemented in partnership with the private sector, evaluated, refined, and scaled.

### Three programs in Agriculture

- Creating new rural micro-enterprises,
- Equipping skilled youth to launch larger-scale agribusinesses, and
- Providing human capital for agro-industrialization.

### Two programs in Information and Communication Technology

- Strengthening digital literacy and computational thinking in secondary schools
- Developing coding academies that teach skills ranging from basic digital design to advanced coding languages





## INVESTMENT

### Youth skills enhancement

- Developing skills enhancement zones near industrial clusters to train workers for full-time roles with employers in these clusters.
- Create an Enabling Youth Employment Index that measures youth employment outcomes and enabling policies within countries over time.
- Establish an Innovation and Information Lab that incubates new ideas, supports entrepreneurs, and conducts cutting-edge research.
- Launch a series of Private Sector Challenge Prizes that provide financial rewards and incentivize private sector actors to develop high-impact, market-based solutions to employment and entrepreneurial challenges.

### Jobs for Youth in Africa Facility

- The Jobs for Youth in Africa Facility would be the primary public sector vehicle for financing JfYA. This resource envelope will consist of funding commitments from the Bank and external funders- including direct co-financing agreements with external funders for specific

activities and the use of existing Bank funds and facilities. The Bank will leverage partnerships for activities that have a strong value proposition beyond the Bank, including: flagship programs, other projects that incorporate youth employment, the Enabling Youth Employment Index, the Innovation and Information Lab, policy support to the regional member countries, and private sector employment challenges tied to financial rewards.

### Unlocking private capital constraints to investment

This includes focused activities that will catalyze private sector investment to stimulate the employment and entrepreneurship ecosystem by:

- Reducing financing risks by providing guarantees to financial institutions for on-lending to SMEs and supporting student loan finance programs to increase lending to students;
- Expanding access to capital by providing lines of credit to financial institutions for lending to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), and making direct investments in businesses that drive youth employment.



# How can partners get involved?

The African Development Bank is calling on development partners, the private sector, foundations and all African stakeholders to get involved. Jobs for Youth in Africa offers interested partners tailored opportunities to engage:

## Knowledge Generation and Incubation

Research and academic institutions, entrepreneurial networks, and others can share best practices and build the evidence base on promising interventions and also jointly incubate promising new solutions.

## Program Design and Implementation

Private, public, and civil society organizations can provide inputs to program design and support implementation for key activities.

## Job linkages

Private sector employers can partner on specific programs and gain skilled labor to grow and expand their businesses.

## Funding

Public, private, and philanthropic institutions can pool resources to coordinate efforts and maximize impact.

These partnerships will enable Jobs for Youth in Africa to achieve its ambitions and equip young people across the continent to realize their full economic potential.

## Voices of Youth

“Vocational training programs are only useful if they are linked closely with the employers with strong commitment towards offering jobs, otherwise the youth are never attracted to such programs.”

– Diana, Rwanda









## The African Development Bank

The African Development Bank aims to achieve sustainable economic development and social progress through investments in its regional member countries, policy advice, and technical assistance.

Its historic work on youth employment includes the launch of the Joint Youth Employment Initiative for Africa, a collaboration between the African Development Bank, the African Union Commission, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, and the International Labor Organization.

The Bank has an extensive portfolio of employment-related projects. These include more than USD 1.6 billion of investment in education, including 34% to technical vocational education and training, over the past decade, and budget support for policy reform – such as the Rwanda Skills, Employability, and Entrepreneurship Program, focused on reducing skills mismatches in the labor market.

The African Development Bank also supports entrepreneurship, including through the Africa SME program and Souk At-tanmia, a partnership with United Nations agencies, private sector actors, donors, and civil society organizations to provide grants and technical assistance to entrepreneurs in Tunisia. Under the program, 61 young entrepreneurs received funding and coaching to grow or to start their businesses, with approximately four jobs created per grantee. The AfDB is also a member of the Let's Work global partnership to address employment.

<http://www.afdb.org/en/the-high-5/improve-the-quality-of-life-for-the-people-of-africa/>



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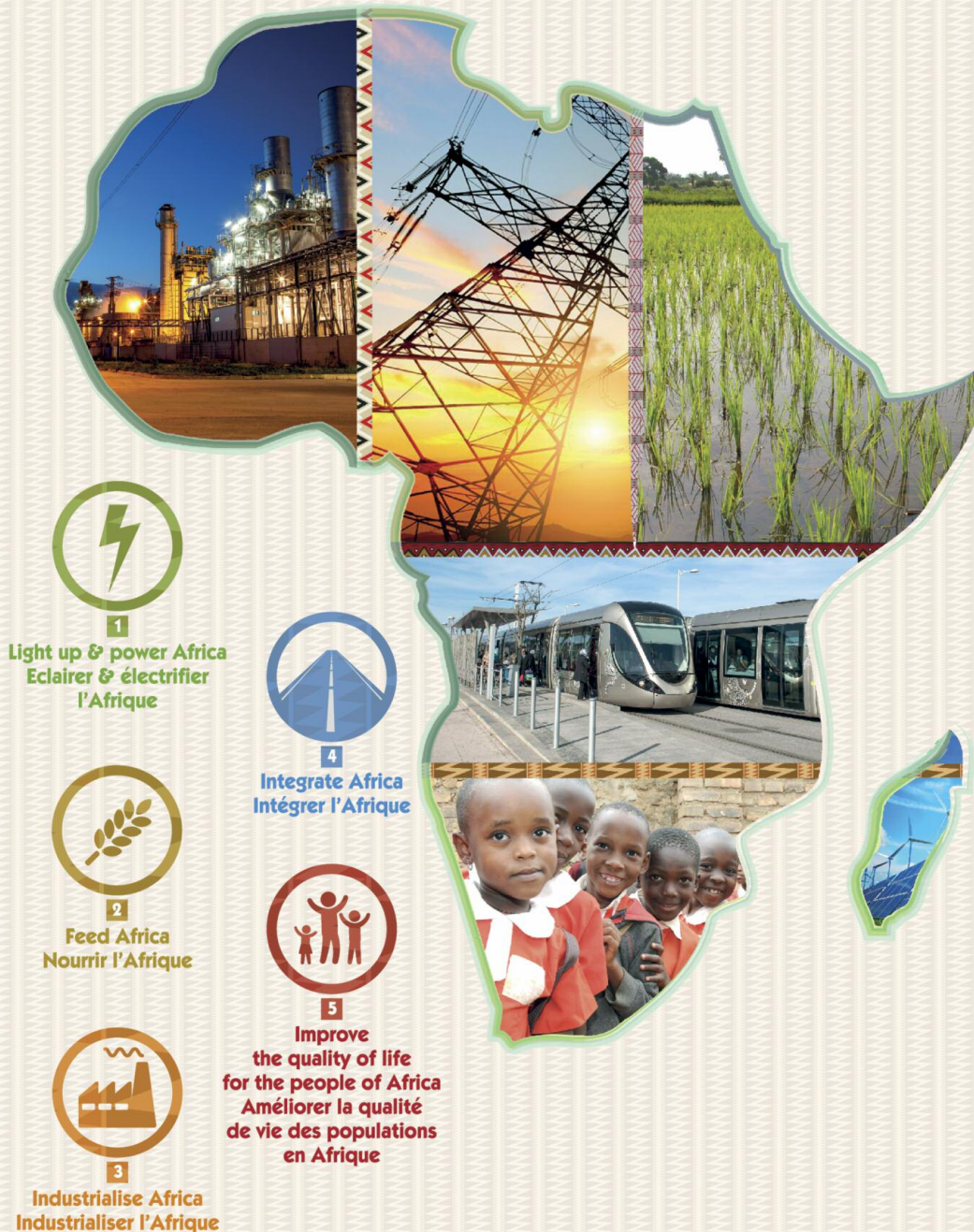
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# The High 5 for transforming Africa pour transformer l'Afrique



**1**  
Light up & power Africa  
Eclairer & électrifier  
l'Afrique

**2**  
Feed Africa  
Nourrir l'Afrique

**3**  
Industrialise Africa  
Industrialiser l'Afrique

**4**  
Integrate Africa  
Intégrer l'Afrique

**5**  
Improve  
the quality of life  
for the people of Africa  
Améliorer la qualité  
de vie des populations  
en Afrique

## The High 5s Agenda

Five priority actions for the African Development Bank and for Africa. The High 5s Agenda is AfDB's channel for focusing and scaling up its 2013-2022 Ten Year Strategy, to bring about the social and economic transformation of Africa. The High 5s are designed to deliver the twin objectives of the Ten Year Strategy: inclusive growth that is shared by all; and the gradual transition to green growth. The High 5s are: Light up and power Africa; Feed Africa; Industrialise Africa; Integrate Africa; Improve the quality of life for the people of Africa.

## Les High 5

Ce sont les cinq grandes priorités de la Banque africaine de développement et de l'Afrique. La BAD en fait un levier pour renforcer et étendre la mise en œuvre de sa stratégie décennale 2013-2022 visant à transformer l'Afrique aux plans social et économique.

Les High 5 poursuivent le double objectif de cette stratégie décennale : une croissance inclusive partagée par tous et une transition progressive vers une croissance verte.

Les High 5 déclinent les priorités suivantes : Éclairer l'Afrique et l'alimenter en énergie ; Nourrir l'Afrique ; Industrialiser l'Afrique ; Intégrer l'Afrique ;

Améliorer la qualité de vie des Africains.