



The Common Journey Initiative

ADVANCING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SKILLS EXPANSION IN AFRICA



NEA Director-General William D. Magwood, IV (right) and OECD Development Centre Director Ragnheiður Elín Arnadóttir at the jointly organised event Advancing Africa's Sustainable Economic Development Through Innovative Frameworks for Capacity in Nuclear Skills, Technologies, and Policies.

Developing and deploying clean energy technologies in Africa is essential to the economic development of the continent. Because of new technologies coming to the global market – particularly small modular reactors – many African governments envision a game-changing opportunity to apply nuclear technologies to power their economies and societies.

The Common Journey initiative is a groundbreaking collaborative effort of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA) and the OECD Development Centre to support efforts in Africa to include nuclear energy as a complement to renewables in their energy mix in order to advance economic development.

The initiative is based on the principle that governments in NEA member countries and in African countries can use nuclear technology to improve quality of life while meeting their energy security, environmental and economic development goals. By developing frameworks for co-operation in Africa and effectively leveraging the expertise and best practices of NEA member countries, the initiative promotes industrial growth and development, education and skills expansion, and societal advancement through a comprehensive platform for policy development, knowledge sharing and capacity building.



Key objectives

The Common Journey initiative is designed to bring international co-operation and joint action to African countries interested in developing nuclear energy programmes by:

- serving as a forum for sharing and analysing information, capacities and best practices among governments, universities and businesses in interested African countries;
- creating mutually beneficial partnerships with NEA member countries' governments and academic and industrial organisations;
- building technical skills to meet industrial and economic development needs;
- facilitating communication with stakeholders and the public;
- supporting an expanding, gender-balanced generation of technical and policy experts.

NEA Director-General William D. Magwood, IV and
H.E. Wycliffe Musalia Mudavadi, Prime Cabinet Secretary of Kenya.

How the Common Journey initiative works

Common Journey will serve as a platform for sharing and analysing information and experiences through both new and existing co-operative frameworks. For efficient implementation of the initiative, a trilateral Memorandum of Understanding is being established between the NEA, the African Union and the African Commission on Nuclear Energy, based on four pillars.

The four pillars of the Common Journey initiative

Pillar I
**Supporting
governmental
infrastructure**



Pillar II
**Building human
capacity**



Pillar III
**Ensuring stakeholder
engagement**



Pillar IV
**Empowering
women**



Pillar I: **Supporting governmental infrastructure**

- Facilitating an open dialogue among government policy specialists, regulators and other stakeholders in the energy field.
- Building expertise in ministries, agencies and with policymakers to maximise the opportunities presented by nuclear energy development.
- Assessing existing assets and gaps related to the deployment and operation of nuclear energy facilities.

Pillar II: **Building human capacity**

- Establishing pan-African collaborations to maximise investments, modelled on effective approaches used in NEA countries.
- Building collaborations with universities from NEA countries in science, technology, research and innovation, especially through the Global Forum on Nuclear Education.
- Developing “Train the Trainer” programmes to support the expansion of essential skills.

Pillar III: **Ensuring stakeholder engagement**

- Disseminating information to build awareness of nuclear energy development across Africa.
- Sharing useful best practices developed in NEA countries for involving stakeholders and the public in regulatory decisions.
- Supporting the development of pan-African business and professional associations to build understanding and engagement regarding the role of nuclear energy in economic development.

Pillar IV: **Empowering women**

- Sharing insights and lessons learnt on ways to achieve gender balance in nuclear institutions.
- Creating pathways for women to take leadership roles and strengthening women’s contributions to existing decision-making processes.
- Raising awareness of the benefits of science and technology in economic development and the daily lives of women.

Common Journey products and activities

The Common Journey initiative will be implemented through collaboration with the NEA's extensive existing activities and in partnership with a global network of national ministries, universities, organisations and private sector companies in both NEA member countries and in African countries. Opportunities for engagement under the Common Journey initiative include:

- **System costs studies:** The NEA provides system modelling of different energy policy choices to its member countries. These studies, prepared in close co-operation with the requesting country or region, can help energy experts and policymakers gain additional insights about the cost implications of different strategic choices when designing future electricity and energy systems. No such studies have been performed in Africa thus far, but the time is now right.
- **Stakeholder Involvement Workshops:** These workshops strive to enable effective communication on nuclear energy matters to the broader society, such as nuclear energy's contributions to medicine, agriculture, decarbonisation and energy security, and develop strategies to engage stakeholders and provide mechanisms to inform and exchange with the public in Africa.
- **Nuclear Education National Workshops:** These workshops provide platforms to promote collaboration between national stakeholders (academia, government, civil society and industry) to share best practices, identify ways to overcome barriers to nuclear education and to outline future development scenarios for the country.
- **International Mentoring Workshops:** These workshops encourage young female students to pursue studies and careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) through close interaction with inspirational senior leaders in the nuclear sector.
- **Global Forum on Nuclear Education, Science, Technology and Policy (Global Forum) – Africa Section:** The Global Forum – Africa Section will support the development of the workforce through nuclear science and engineering education in Africa to maximise the use of investments. It will build collaboration between stakeholders from Africa and NEA member countries to develop a skills and capacity plan.
- **Nuclear medicine:** The NEA is exploring opportunities to build capacity in areas such as nuclear medicine to empower healthcare professionals in Africa to harness the transformative potential of medical radioisotopes for diagnosing and treating cancer and building resilient healthcare systems.

Engagement with the Common Journey initiative

Supporting the Common Journey initiative will provide participants with the following opportunities:

- The ability to communicate and engage with interested governments in a comprehensive, pan-African manner through co-operative frameworks and ready access to key decision makers.
- Access to experts with deep experience and capabilities across a broad range of civil nuclear energy technology and policy areas.
- Engagement with NEA countries on nuclear development projects that energise sustainable economic development.
- Support for efforts to secure qualified human resources and build skills that are relevant to the nuclear sector among educators, students and the public.

Partnership opportunities

The NEA welcomes potential partners and sponsors to join the Common Journey initiative and become involved in the vital challenge of preparing Africa for a sustainable, high-skill future. Partnership opportunities include voluntary contributions, event sponsorship or co-hosting.

To partner with the Common Journey initiative, e-mail:
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