



## WEST AFRICA:

### *ECOWAS Regional Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE)*

## Context

The energy systems of the countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) are facing the interrelated challenges of energy poverty, energy security and climate change mitigation. The region, with around 300 million inhabitants has one of the lowest modern energy consumption rates in the world. Only around 8 per cent of the rural population has access to electricity services. Around 60 per cent of the electric generation capacity depends on expensive diesel or heavy fuel oil. There is need for significant investments in sustainable energy infrastructure and services. Apart from significant fossil fuel resources the ECOWAS region can rely on a wide range of untapped renewable energy and energy efficiency potentials. However, so far the ECOWAS countries do not take advantage of these potentials due to various technical, financial, economic, legal, institutional, policy and capacity related barriers.

## Main approach

In order to improve access to modern, reliable and affordable energy services and accelerate the uptake of renewable and energy efficiency technologies, the project assisted the ECOWAS countries in the establishment of ECREEE, a unique regional renewable energy and energy efficiency promotion agency in sub-Saharan Africa. ECREEE started operations in 2010 with initial support of the Austrian and Spanish Governments and technical assistance of UNIDO.

ECREEE activities include policy development, capacity building, awareness raising, knowledge management as well as business and investment promotion.

## Development goal and impact

The project has assisted the ECREEE Secretariat set up a network of national focal institutions in 15 ECOWAS Member States. It also helped make fully operational the ECOWAS Observatory for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency, and a data portal for investors and developers.

Over 41 rural projects are currently under execution in the region. More than 1,000 key stakeholders were trained on various sustainable energy aspects, including on financing, policy, and different technical aspects. Various conferences and workshops on renewable energy and energy efficiency were organized and attended by more than 3,000 participants.

One of the key deliverables of the project was to facilitate the development of ECOWAS renewable energy and energy efficiency policies focusing on industrial development and subsequently their adoption by the Heads of State of the ECOWAS countries.

The best practice example demonstrated through the successful establishment of ECREEE has led to the expansion of the regional centre approach to now include a total of six regions—West Africa, East Africa, Southern Africa, Pacific Island Countries, Caribbean Island Countries and the Middle East and North Africa region as a part of a Global Network of Regional Sustainable Energy Centres.

The global network contributes to enabling environments for increased investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency by addressing existing barriers through the development of regional methodologies and interventions.

## At a glance

Project title: The ECOWAS Regional Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE)—a best practice model for sustainable energy regional centres
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Donors and partners: Government of Austria; Government of Spain, European Union, Global Environment Facility (GEF), USAID, National Governments of ECOWAS
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Budget: EUR 11.5 million
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*For more information:*

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