

Bamako commercial microgrids

The African Development Fund has approved \$302.9 million of financing for a 225 kV electricity interconnection project linking Mauritania and Mali. The project is part of the Desert to Power initiative, which facilitates the development of solar plants in the region.

The Desert-to-Power initiative is supporting the development of 10 GW of solar and storage in the 11 countries of the Sahel, a semi-arid region on the southern edge of the Sahara Desert, stretching across the African continent from Senegal to Ethiopia.

To effectively integrate this new capacity, Mauritania and Mali plan to build a high-voltage electrical interconnection linking their two countries across 1,373 kilometers. It will connect Mauritania to Chad, via Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger.

The 225 kV line between Mauritania and Mali will have a capacity of 600 MW and will be associated with the development of solar plants planned in the region. The interconnection project is accompanied by the construction of a 50 MW PV array in Kiffa, Mauritania. This will connect 100,000 new households (80,000 in Mauritania and 20,000 in Mali) to the electricity network in the localities crossed.

"The approval of this project shows that the Desert-to-Power Initiative is gradually coming to fruition through structuring projects which will make it possible to develop means of producing renewable energy in both countries," said Daniel Schroth, director of renewable energy for the African Development Bank.

The interconnection project will benefit from the financing of \$302.9 million validated at the end of December 2023 by the African Development Fund (ADF). Around 90% of this will be devoted to Mauritania and 10% for Mali.

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