

## **Solar Academy to be launched in Senegal : A relevant initiative for a sustainable energy future !**

Senegal, a country located in West Africa, is facing the challenges of climate change and access to energy, and is at a crucial crossroads in its transition to renewable energy sources. The region, rich in solar energy resources, offers considerable potential for meeting these challenges and improving the living conditions of its inhabitants.

However, the markets for solar energy products and services in Senegal face a number of obstacles on both the supply and demand sides. These barriers relate to the quality of infrastructure, qualification and certification, local entrepreneurship and innovation, as well as other challenges such as the development of favourable policies and access to low-cost financing.

In recognition of these challenges, the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), with the financial support of the French Government, have established a partnership with the overall objective of strengthening the institutional, technical and networking capacities of member countries through the creation of the Solar Technology Application Resource Centres (STAR C) network. Under this initiative, the project aims to institutionalise training and capacity building through a long-term programme to improve technical skills, effective management, and key decision-making processes throughout the solar technology life cycle. To achieve its objectives in the ECOWAS region, the initiative plans to establish a Solar Energy Academy, with a regional dimension, which will contribute to Senegal's development by offering advanced and effective educational programmes and professional certification in the field of solar energy.

Initially, the Solar Academy will set up short-term training programmes focusing on the installation and maintenance of solar photovoltaic and solar thermal systems. The next step will be for the Academy to provide long-term training courses, such as the MASTER programme. This will create a pool of qualified professionals in the solar photovoltaic and solar thermal sectors. The aim of setting up a solar energy academy in Senegal is to exploit the country's solar potential while strengthening local skills and raising the professional level of those working in the solar energy sector. This initiative is part of a proactive approach aimed at positioning Senegal as a regional leader in the solar energy sector. By strengthening local skills and encouraging the adoption of solar energy, the project will contribute to a sustainable energy transition for the benefit of the population.

The various training programmes will offer a facilitated route to acquiring relevant knowledge and skills in the fields of solar PV and solar thermal, both in Senegal and in the other member countries of the International Solar Alliance within the ECOWAS region. Participants will also

have the opportunity to improve their skills, particularly with regard to standards and maintenance.

The award of the International Solar Alliance/UNIDO/France label will reinforce the credibility and regional scope of the certificates issued at the end of the training course. This is clearly a major advantage on the job market, representing an exceptional opportunity for those who aspire to play an active role in promoting solar energy and a sustainable energy future.

The strengthened partnership between the International Solar Alliance / UNIDO / France and the host institution will contribute to the creation of a skilled workforce engaged in various aspects of photovoltaic solar energy, thermal energy and sustainable development.