

Reskilling is essential for a just energy transition

 By [Nicci Botha](#)

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The energy transition process that will lead us to shift from fossil fuel-based generation to a renewable one started several years ago, and is one that will require new jobs and new skills, as traditional power plants that are reaching their end of life are gradually phased out.



Lamberto Dai Pra', head, Africa, Asia and Oceania, Enel Green Power

"In South Africa, 90% of the electricity is produced from coal and more than 200,000 people are involved directly or indirectly in the mining sector. So the numbers are huge and this transition can have an important impact on socioeconomic development if not properly managed. This is not only a South African problem, it's a worldwide problem.

"Energy transition won't happen in the blink of an eye it will take decades. So we have time to get prepared for such an event. But it is important to understand from now how the relocation and reskilling of workers will take place especially in economic sectors where it has to be implemented," says Lamberto Dai Pra', head of Africa, Asia and Oceania, Enel Green Power.

The key word for development today is sustainability, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) should serve as a guideline for business strategies that really define the actions to be taken for the lowest impact possible and optimal benefits.

"We have to consider this as a great opportunity to do things in the right way. To take the right steps towards real sustainable development. But the main challenge at the heart of the energy transition remains a need for massive investments. So once again, we need enabling environments through appropriate framework. We need strong political commitments from government to encourage the private sector.

South Africa has a lot to teach the world in this regard. An important point for operators is that as countries gradually integrate renewables into their energy systems the appropriate reskilling is to be implemented, which, of course, must have supportive educational resources. As operators we are fully aware of the need to have appropriate programmes to reskill people.

"We need to have a dialogue with government, municipalities and international institutions as this is a global matter. The important thing is not to remain stubbornly entrenched in technologies that will inevitably fail in the long term, but to all pull together towards a just energy transition for all which will contribute to the long-term regional prosperity," he says.

ABOUT NICCI BOTHA

Nicci Botha has been wordsmithing for more than 20 years, covering just about every subject under the sun and then some. She's strung together words on sustainable development, maritime matters, mining, marketing, medical, lifestyle... and that elixir of life - chocolate. Nicci has worked for local and international media houses including Primedia, Caxton, Lloyd's and Reuters. Her new passion is digital media.

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