



Ministry of
Energy



Zambia Annual Renewable Energy Conference

2026

**THEME: “POWERING ZAMBIA’S FUTURE: PIONEERING POLICY,
INNOVATION, AND PARTNERSHIPS FOR ENERGY SECURITY**

From Policy to Action

Background

Zambia, like many African nations, faces deep and persistent energy poverty. Nearly two-thirds of rural households lack access to electricity, and where power is available, it is often unreliable and unaffordable. The country's heavy dependence on hydropower has left it acutely vulnerable to climate-induced droughts, triggering prolonged load-shedding that disrupts businesses, schools, hospitals, and households. This energy insecurity continues to slow industrial growth, limit agricultural productivity, and restrict opportunities for youth and women in both rural and urban areas.

Yet Zambia holds vast untapped potential. Abundant solar resources, emerging wind corridors, biomass from agriculture and forestry residues, and opportunities in small hydropower provide a clear pathway to diversify the national energy mix. Coupled with its strategic location within the Southern African Power Pool (SAPP), Zambia is well-placed to evolve from an energy-deficit country into a regional clean energy hub capable of exporting renewable power and catalyzing industrialization.

Globally, the energy transition is accelerating, but Africa still carries 83% of the world's energy access deficit. For Zambia, the transition is not just about technology—it is about addressing poverty, resilience, and inclusive development. This conference therefore seeks to go beyond discussion, to mobilize finance, forge innovation-driven partnerships, and integrate academic research with industry practice, in order to deliver tangible solutions that can accelerate universal access, unlock rural productivity, and achieve SDG7 – affordable and clean energy for all.

About the Conference

The first edition of the Zambia Annual Renewable Energy Conference 2026 will serve as a premier platform for national and international stakeholders to convene, deliberate, and co-create Zambia's clean energy future. Scheduled for March 2026 at the Intercontinental Hotel in Lusaka, the event will combine:

- Peer-reviewed academic papers that bridge research and practice.
- High-level dialogues with policymakers and industry leaders.
- Exhibitions and networking forums to showcase technologies, financing mechanisms, and inclusive innovations.

The Conference features a diverse technical program, including exhibitions, tutorials, workshops, keynote speeches, and presentations, all designed to generate actionable outcomes and strengthen partnerships beyond the event. The conference targets a broad spectrum of participants ranging from senior government officials and policy makers to industry leaders, academia, development partners, and international organizations, making it a flagship gathering for stakeholders committed to advancing sustainable and inclusive energy solutions in Africa. The conference will focus on bridging the gap between academia and industry, while unlocking finance, diversifying the energy mix, advancing innovation, and ensuring that Zambia's energy transition is both inclusive and resilient.

IMPORTANT DATES

Milestone	Timeline	Remarks
Call for Abstracts & Tutorials Opens	October 2025	Submissions for technical papers, tutorials, and workshop proposals.
Sponsorship & Exhibition Booking Opens	November 2025	Priority given to early commitments for booth allocation.
Early Bird Registration	November 2025 January 2026	Discounted rates are available before standard registration window begins.
Call for Papers/Tutorials Closes	December 31, 2025	Final deadline for all technical contributions.
Notification of Acceptance	January 15, 2026	Authors and presenters receive confirmation.
Final Program Release	February 2026	Detailed schedule shared with participants and partners.
Conference (Main Event)	Last Week of March 2026	Venue: Intercontinental Hotel, Lusaka, Zambia.
Post-Conference Reports & Action Plans	April – May 2026	Dissemination of key recommendations and partnership frameworks.

Objectives

Primary Objective

To accelerate Zambia's renewable energy transition by transforming dialogue into tangible investments, bridging academic research with industry practice, and establishing measurable frameworks for tracking progress toward energy security and universal access.

Specific Objectives

1. **Provide an inaugural platform that bridges the academia and industry** by publishing peer-reviewed research papers that address real energy sector challenges, creating a knowledge platform that connects academic and industry.
2. **Provide a platform to promote technology and innovation** through exhibitions, demonstrations, and youth-led innovation challenges that showcase scalable solutions for rural electrification, clean cooking, and energy storage.
3. **Provide a platform to promote inclusive energy access** by developing targeted programs for women and youth entrepreneurs, ensuring marginalized communities' benefit from the energy transition through capacity building and mentorship.
4. **Establish accountability mechanisms** through a post-conference tracking framework that monitors implementation of commitments, measures MW capacity additions, and documents policy changes quarterly.
5. **Strengthen regional collaboration** through the GRC Network partnership, facilitating knowledge exchange between Zambia, Malawi, Rwanda, and Scotland to accelerate cross-border learning and investment.

Scope and Key Themes

Tutorial Sessions

This session will deepen knowledge transfer targeting the academia and industry. The tutorial sessions will be held on the **Second day** of the Conference related on Community of Practice in Renewable Energy Project, data disaggregation and Gender Inclusion in Energy sector. **Lead by: Dr Damien Frame & ZARENA & UNZA**

Masterclass Sessions

A parallel session policy makers, investors and industry, the master class sessions will be held on the **Second day** of the Conference related on Policy & Regulation unbundling the Zambia Energy Compact harmonising Zambia's private sector engagement and renewable energy regulatory framework, Energy -Water-Food–

Nexus, Carbon Markets & Green bonds financing, Mini-grid development and Practical training on de-risking and accessing carbon credit revenues **Lead by: Dr. Aran Eales & Lloyds Financials**

Academic Contributions & Peer-Reviewed Papers

In addition to policy and industry dialogue, the conference will feature an academic track with peer-reviewed research papers. Scholars and postgraduate students will be invited to submit papers on thematic areas including energy-water-food nexus, renewable energy technologies, climate resilience, and inclusive financing models. Accepted papers will be presented in dedicated sessions and published in conference proceedings, contributing to global academic discourse and providing evidence-based insights for Zambia's energy transition.

Thematic Areas - Academic Track

- (a) Renewable Energy Technologies
- (b) Energy-water-food nexus
- (c) Climate Resilience and Inclusive Financing Models
- (d) Green hydrogen production
- (e) Energy Storage Systems (Batteries, hydrogen, thermal, pumped hydros)
- (f) Smart grids
- (g) Energy systems Modelling and Forecasting
- (h) Policy, Regulation and Climate Finance

Structure of the Conference

The Zambia Annual Renewable Energy Conference 2026 will be structured to ensure maximum knowledge sharing, engagement, and collaboration. The Programme will include:

Day 1: Opening & High-Level Engagement

- Opening ceremony with Vice President as Guest of Honor
- Keynote speeches by government leaders, academia, policymakers, and industry experts
- Plenary sessions on Zambia's energy transition and financing needs
- Investment announcement session for public declaration of new commitments
- Exhibition opening and networking reception

Day 2: Capacity Building & Knowledge Exchange

- Parallel tutorial sessions for capacity building
- Technical workshops and panel discussions covering thematic areas
- Academic paper presentations (peer-reviewed)
- Masterclass sessions from industry experts
- Pitch sessions for investor-developer matching

Day 3: Innovation & Implementation

- Youth Innovation Challenge finals with live funding decisions
- Policy dialogue on regulatory frameworks
- Implementation commitment session with stakeholders
- Closing ceremony and way forward
- Zambia Energy Awards & Gala Dinner to recognize achievements in the energy sector and sponsors

Proposed detailed Three-Day Programme

Day 1: Opening & High-Level Engagement

Theme: Setting the Vision for Zambia's Energy Future

Time	Activity	Description	Venue
07:30 - 08:30	Registration & Welcome Coffee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delegates register, receive conference materials, and network while visiting exhibition stands	Main Foyer & Exhibition Hall
08:30 - 09:00	VIP Reception & Media Briefing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Private reception for ministers, VC, Ambassadors, and key sponsors with media photo opportunities	VIP Lounge
09:00 - 09:45	Official Opening Ceremony	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome remarks by ZARENA Conference Chair• Address by UNZA VC• Address by Minister of Energy• Keynote by Vice President (Guest of Honor)• Cultural performance celebrating Zambian heritage	Main Auditorium

09:45 - 10:30	High-Impact Keynote Presentations	<p>"Zambia's Energy Transition Roadmap 2026-2035"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Energy <p>"Unlocking \$11. 5 billion in Renewable Investments Target "</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AfDB/World Bank/REEP Representative <p>"Regional Energy Integration Opportunities"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SAPP/SADC/SACREE Energy Director 	Main Auditorium
10:30 - 11:00	Networking Coffee Break & Exhibition Opening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official ribbon cutting for exhibition floor followed by guided VIP tour of premier stands 	Exhibition Hall
11:00 - 12:00	Ministerial Panel: Policy Enablers for Energy Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministers from Energy, Finance, Commerce, and Environment discuss cross-sector collaboration 	Main Auditorium
12:00 - 12:45	Mini-grid Financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BGFA/SE4ALL 	Main Auditorium
12:45 - 14:00	Networking Lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structured networking with designated tables by sector (solar, hydro, wind, biomass, etc.) 	Conference Restaurant
14:00 - 14:30	Sponsor Spotlight Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 main sponsors present flagship projects and innovations (10 minutes each) 	Main Auditorium
14:30 - 15:30	Plenary Session: Financing Zambia's Energy Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Panel featuring: Development Finance Institutions Commercial Banks Green Bond Issuers Private Equity Funds Moderated by international energy finance expert 	Main Auditorium
15:30 - 16:00	Exhibition Walkabout & Tea Break	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structured tours of innovation zones with technology demonstrations 	Exhibition Hall
16:00 - 16:45	Industry Leaders Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEOs from leading energy companies share market insights and growth strategies 	Main Auditorium

17:00 - 19:00	Welcome Reception & Cultural Evening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional music and dance performances Local cuisine showcase Informal networking Exhibition remains open 	Garden Terrace & Exhibition Hall
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Day 2 : Capacity Building & Knowledge Exchange

Theme: Building Capacity and Sharing Innovation

Time	Activity	Description	Venue
08:00 - 08:30	Registration & Morning Coffee	Delegates arrive and visit exhibition stands	Foyer & Exhibition Hall
08:30 - 10:00	Academic Paper Presentations	Top 3 peer-reviewed papers presented (10 minutes each): Renewable energy research from local universities Innovation award nominees	Main Auditorium
10:00 - 10:30	Coffee Break & Exhibition Time	Networking and technology demonstrations at stands	Exhibition Hall
		BREAKAWAY SESSIONS	
10:30 - 12:00	Parallel Tutorial Sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community of Practice in Renewable Energy Project, data disaggregation and Gender Inclusion in Energy sector. Modeling for Renewables 	Breakout Rooms A-D
10:30 - 12:00	Technical Workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshop 1: Battery Storage Integration & Grid Stability Workshop 2: Green Hydrogen Production Opportunities Workshop 3: Biomass & Waste-to-Energy Technologies Workshop 4: Smart Grid & IoT Applications 	Workshop Rooms 1-4

12:30 - 13:45	Lunch & Poster Session	Academic posters displayed, researchers available for discussions	Restaurant & Gallery
13:45 - 14:00	Exhibitor Pitch Block	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 exhibitors present innovations (3 minutes each) 	Main Auditorium
14:00 - 15:30	Masterclass Sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy & Regulation unbundling the Zambia Energy Compact harmonizing Zambia's private sector engagement and renewable energy regulatory framework, Energy -Water-Food- Nexus, Carbon Markets & Green bonds financing, Mini-grid development and Practical training on de-risking and accessing carbon credit revenues 	Masterclass Rooms A-C
14:00 - 17:00	Pitch Sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-scheduled 30-minute meetings between: Project developers and investors Technology providers and buyers Government agencies and implementation partners 	Pitch Room Suites
15:30 - 16:00	Tea Break & Exhibition Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation showcase with live demonstrations 	Exhibition Hall
16:00 - 17:00	Panel: Women in Energy Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrating and promoting gender diversity in the energy sector with successful female leaders 	Main Auditorium
17:00 - 17:30	Day 2 Wrap-up & Announcements	Summary of key insights and preview of Day 3	Main Auditorium

Day 3: Innovation & Implementation

Theme: From Vision to Action

Time	Activity	Description	Venue
08:00 - 08:30	Morning Coffee & Exhibition	Final opportunity to visit exhibition stands	Exhibition Hall
08:30 - 10:00	Panel Discussion: Role of Youth in the Energy Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Young energy professionals and entrepreneurs share experiences• Discussion on education, skills development, and career pathways• Youth-led energy initiatives and success stories• Addressing barriers to youth participation in the energy sector• Intergenerational dialogue with senior industry leaders• Panelists include youth innovators, university representatives, and youth employment advocates	Main Auditorium
10:00 - 10:30	Coffee Break & Youth Innovation Showcase	Meet the young innovators and view their prototypes	Innovation Hub
10:30 - 12:00	Policy Dialogue: Regulatory Frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interactive session with:<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Energy Regulation Board✓ ZEMA (Environmental Management)✓ Ministry of Energy OPPPI• Discussion on streamlining approvals and incentives	Main Auditorium
12:00 - 12:30	Special Presentation: Regional Energy Trade	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Opportunities in SADC power pool and cross-border projects	Main Auditorium
12:30 - 13:45	Lunch & Final Exhibition Hour	Last chance for business card exchanges and deal discussions	Restaurant & Exhibition

13:45 - 15:00	Implementation Commitment Session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder pledges for 2026-2027 • Partnership announcements • Project implementation timelines • Signing of collaboration agreements 	Main Auditorium
15:00 - 15:45	Closing Ceremony	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conference summary and key takeaways • Announcement of ZARENA 2027 theme and dates • Closing remarks by Minister of Energy • Vote of thanks 	Main Auditorium
15:45 - 16:00	Afternoon Tea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal farewell networking 	Foyer
17:30 - 18:30	Pre-Gala Cocktail Reception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome drinks and entertainment 	Gala Venue Foyer
18:30 - 22:00	Zambia Energy Awards & Gala Dinner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red carpet arrival Award categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sponsors and Partners ✓ Best Renewable Energy Project ✓ Innovation of the Year ✓ Energy Access Champion ✓ Lifetime Achievement Award ✓ Best Exhibition Stand ✓ Young Energy Professional • Gala dinner with entertainment • Closing celebration 	Grand Ballroom

Expected Results

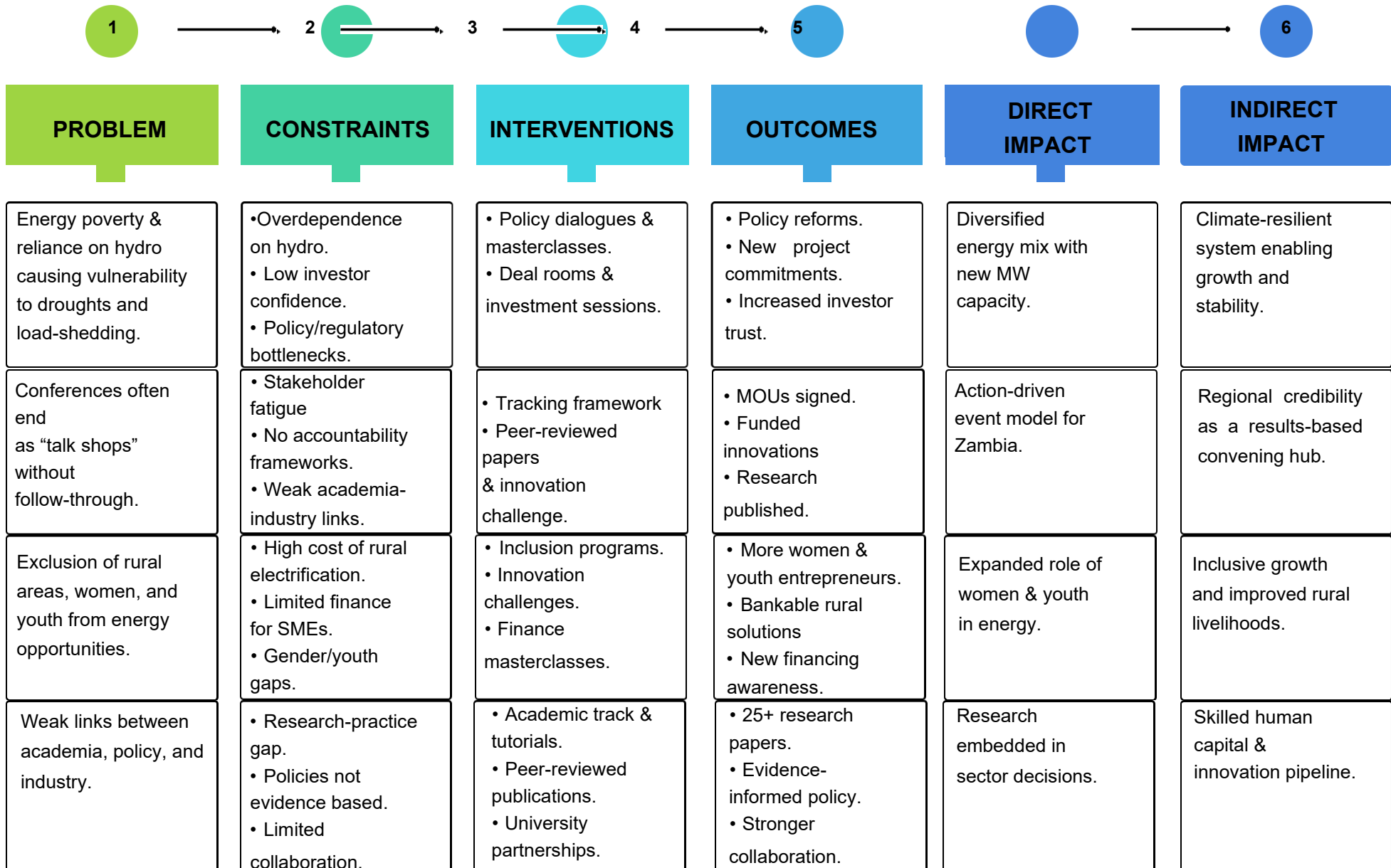
- Strengthened partnerships across government, private sector, academia, and civil society.
- Policy and regulatory recommendations to improve Zambia's energy investment climate.
- Knowledge sharing and capacity building across sectors
- Enhanced awareness of innovative financing instruments and technologies.
- Positioning Zambia as a leader in Southern Africa's renewable energy transition.
- Published conference proceedings with minimum 25 peer-reviewed academic papers.
- Established tracking framework for monitoring post-conference implementation.

Target Audience

The conference will attract diverse participants from across Zambia, the region, and internationally, including:

- Government officials and policymakers.
- Energy sector investors and developers.
- Researchers and academics.
- Private sector leaders and entrepreneurs.
- International development partners and NGOs.
- Financial institutions and banks.
- Civil society organisations and advocacy groups.
- Media and communication professionals.
- Students and young professionals
- Women energy entrepreneurs

THEORY OF CHANGE



Event Marketing Strategy

A comprehensive marketing strategy will ensure wide visibility, engagement, and participation. This includes:

- Early engagement through call for papers (5 months prior) and investor pre-qualification
- Digital marketing campaigns on social media and dedicated conference website
- Media partnerships with local, regional, and international outlets
- Direct outreach to CEOs, ministers, and development partners
- University engagement for student participation and research submissions
- Collaborations with industry associations, universities, and networks
- "Not Another Talk Shop" campaign emphasizing action-oriented outcomes
- Post-event reporting and continuous engagement to sustain momentum

About the Organizers

The Zambia Renewable Energy Association (ZARENA), established in 2017, is a membership-based non-profit organization committed to advancing renewable energy awareness, policy advocacy, and sustainable development in Zambia. ZARENA works with government, development partners, academia, civil society, and the private sector to accelerate Zambia's transition to sustainable energy.

ZARENA is also a partner under the Global Renewable Centre (GRC) Network, a Scottish Government-funded project that covers four member countries: Zambia, Malawi, Rwanda, and Scotland. The GRC Network strengthens collaboration across these countries by advancing research, capacity building, and knowledge harmonisation in renewable energy. This partnership positions ZARENA to not only drive Zambia's national agenda but also contribute to regional and international efforts to scale up clean energy deployment, gender inclusion, and climate resilience.

Partner Organizations:



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1. Strathclyde University GRC Network- Technical oversight and Coordination
2. Lloyds Financial Limited - Lead financial partner
3. Ministry of Energy - Government partner
4. University of Zambia (UNZA) - Academic partner for peer review and Journal
5. Copperbelt University - Technical review and student engagement

By convening the Zambia Annual Renewable Energy Conference, ZARENA aims to establish a flagship platform for renewable energy dialogue, peer-reviewed knowledge exchange, investment mobilisation, and cross-country collaboration, cementing Zambia's role as both a national leader and a regional hub in the clean energy transition.

Contact & Registration

Zambia Renewable Energy Association (ZARENA)

Lusaka, Zambia

Email: conference@zarena.org.zm

Website: www.zarena.org.zm

Registration details will be shared on the official conference website.

Conference Dates: March 2026

Venue: Intercontinental Hotel, Lusaka, Zambia