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In recent years, the global shift towards renewable energy sources has gained considerable momentum, with countries around the world recognizing the need to transition to sustainable and environmentally friendly power solutions. In this context, Rwanda has emerged as a shining example of a nation with ambitious solar energy targets and a comprehensive roadmap to transform its energy landscape by 2024.

Rwanda, a small landlocked country in East Africa, has set its sights on becoming a regional leader in clean energy production. The government's commitment to sustainable development is evident in its efforts to harness the abundant solar resources that the country possesses. With a goal to achieve 100% electrification by 2024, Rwanda has adopted an integrated approach, focusing on solar energy to drive its economic growth and improve the quality of life for its citizens.

One of the key pillars of Rwanda's solar energy strategy is the diversification of its energy mix. By reducing dependence on traditional fossil fuels and hydropower, the country aims to enhance energy security and mitigate the environmental impact of power generation. The Rwandan government has taken significant steps to attract investment in the solar sector, creating an environment conducive to the growth of renewable energy projects.

The Renewable Energy Fund (REF), established by the government, plays a pivotal role in financing solar initiatives. This fund provides financial support to both public and private entities involved in solar energy projects, fostering innovation and collaboration within the industry. As a result, Rwanda has witnessed a surge in solar installations, ranging from large-scale solar farms to decentralized off-grid solutions that reach remote areas.

The commitment to solar energy is evident in the remarkable progress Rwanda has made in a relatively short span. The government has successfully implemented the Scaling Up Electricity Access Program (SEAP), which aims to provide electricity to rural households through off-grid renewable energy solutions. This initiative not only addresses energy poverty but also creates employment opportunities in the solar sector, contributing to the overall socio-economic development of the country.

To accelerate the adoption of solar energy, Rwanda has implemented favorable policies and regulatory frameworks. These measures include feed-in tariffs, tax incentives, and simplified approval processes for solar projects. Such policies attract local and international investors, fostering a vibrant solar market in the country. Additionally, the government has been proactive in promoting research and development in the solar sector, encouraging the deployment of cutting-edge technologies for improved efficiency and sustainability.

Looking ahead to 2024, Rwanda's solar energy roadmap envisions a substantial increase in installed solar capacity. The country aims to generate a significant percentage of its total electricity from solar sources,

further reducing its carbon footprint. The widespread adoption of solar energy is expected to drive economic growth, create jobs, and enhance energy resilience.

\*New grid connected projects are expected in the near future, however they are subject to the power demand and the Least Cost Development Plan for the sake of grid stability.

Off-grid and Mini-grid Tariffs in rural areas are governed by the ability of households to pay for electricity. A RURA regulation defines tariff principles for tariff calculations. RURA has the right to review tariffs.

Rwanda will next week host the 7th edition of the Global Off-Grid Solar Forum and Expo (GOGSFE) in Kigali city from 18th to 20th October 2022, attracting over 800 delegates from 50 countries.

The Forum will be co-hosted by Rwanda's Ministry of Infrastructure in collaboration with the World Bank Group's Lighting Global Program and the industry Global Association for Off-grid Solar Energy (GOGLA).

KTPress takes a look at how the uptake of solar energy (Off-grid) and how it has impacted the lives of Rwandans who are not connected to the National grid as the country eyes attaining the 100% electricity for all by the year 2024.

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