



Pre-feasibility Study for the Burundi–Tanzania Power Interconnector

EU CEPA – The Continental Energy Programme in Africa

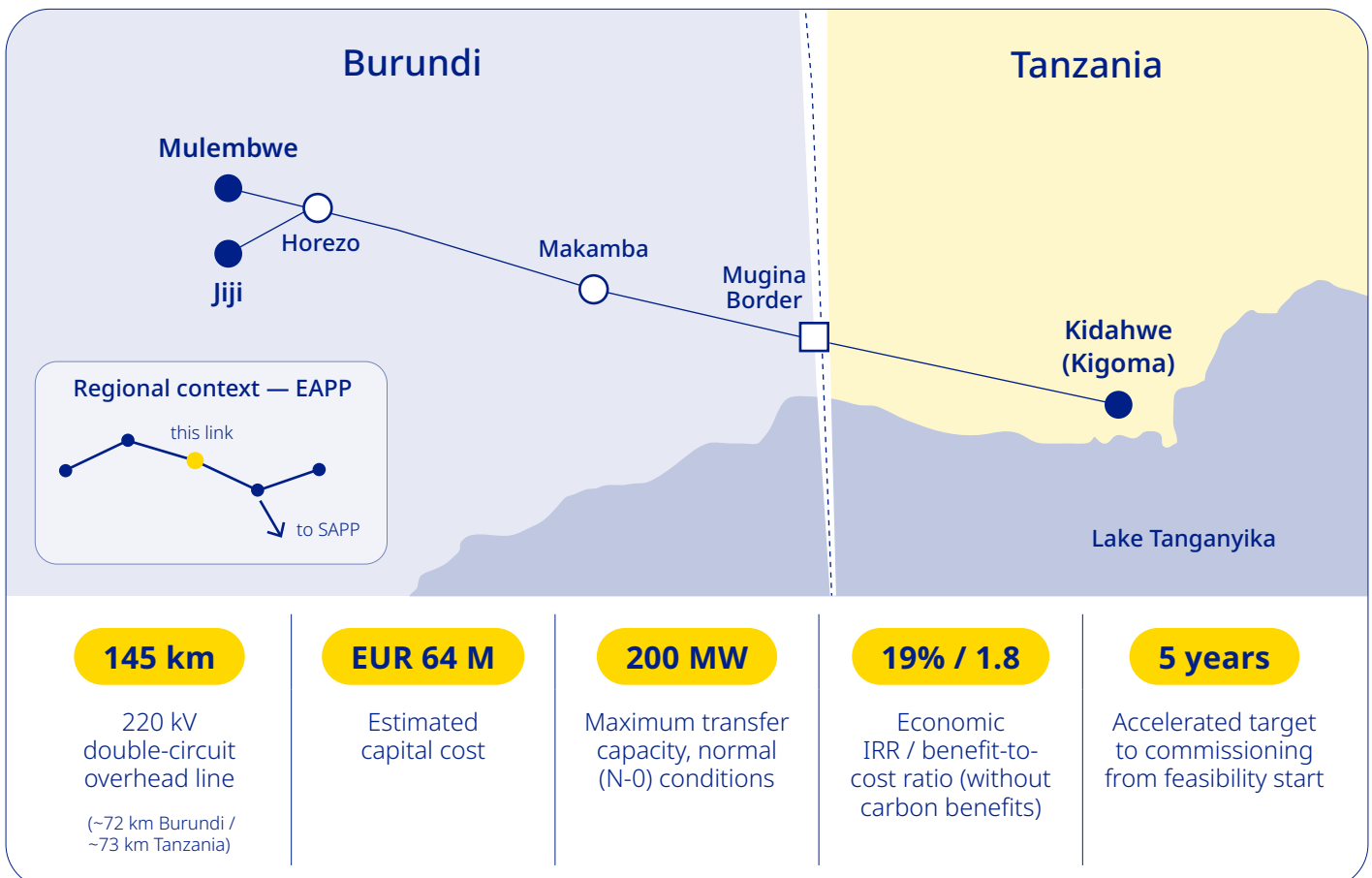
AUGUST 2026

Connecting two grids to advance Africa's single electricity market

The **Burundi–Tanzania interconnector** is a 220 kV double-circuit line linking Burundi's new Jiji-Mulembwe hydropower complex to Tanzania's grid at Kigoma.

It is expected to firm up Burundi's hydro-dependent system, open cross-border power trade between the two countries, and form an important link in the emerging East African grid, a priority project under the Continental Power System Master Plan (CMP), supported by the EU-funded Continental Energy Programme in Africa (CEPA) as part of the Global Gateway initiative.

Indicative corridor (not to scale)



Why this project?

Burundi

Burundi has one of the region's lowest electricity access rates (around 12%, World Bank 2023) and a small, hydro-dependent grid that falls short in the dry season, when expensive diesel plants fill the gap. **Peak demand is projected to rise from 92 MW in 2025 to about 208 MW by 2040**, and **annual energy demand from 475 GWh to about 1,138 GWh**, growth that a single national system will struggle to meet alone.



Tanzania

Tanzania has a far larger grid with growing surplus and a national goal to become a **net electricity exporter** and a **hub for the Eastern Africa Power Pool (EAPP)**. Peak demand is projected to grow from 2,507 MW in 2025 to about 8,483 MW by 2040. The interconnector lets Tanzania put surplus capacity to work and earn revenue from regional trade.



**One grid,
one market,
one vision**

The line does more than connect two countries. It strengthens the Eastern Africa Power Pool, which is the gateway between the Southern African Power Pool (through Tanzania), the Central African Power Pool (through the DRC) and onward towards Northern Africa, the Middle East and Europe. Each new link of this kind moves the African Union's vision of one grid, one market, one vision closer to reality.

Benefits of the Interconnector



Security of supply



Regional power trade



Lower-cost electricity



Grid redundancy and stability

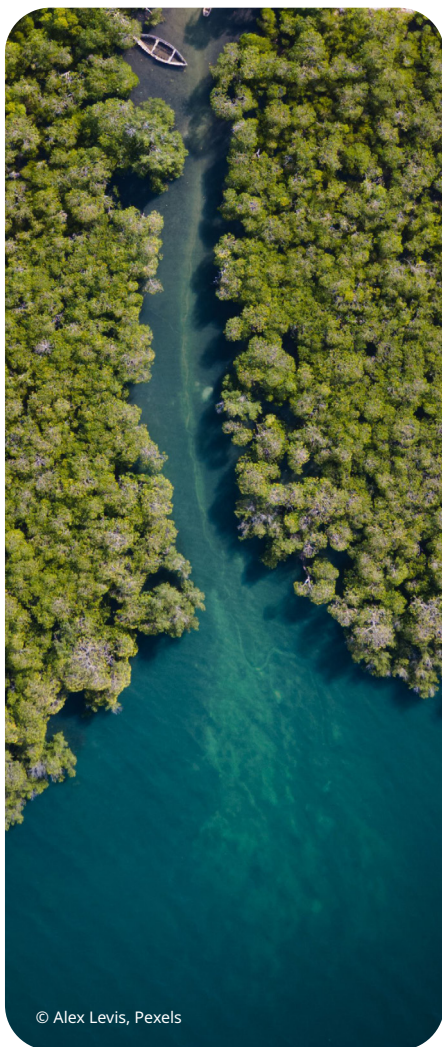


Lower carbon intensity



Energy access and local jobs

The investment case and technical snapshot



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Project scope

The recommended option is a 220 kV double-circuit overhead line running from the Horezo substation, near the Jiji-Mulembwe hydropower plants, through a new Makamba substation in Burundi, across the border at Mugina to Kidahwe (Kigoma) in Tanzania. It includes new busbars, four 150 MVA transformers and associated feeder bays. A pre-feasibility cost-benefit analysis confirmed the 220 kV double-circuit as the least-cost choice over a higher-capacity 400 kV alternative and a 'do-nothing' case.

The economic case

The project is economically sound: an economic internal rate of return of about 19% and a benefit-to-cost ratio of 1.8, even before counting the value of avoided carbon. It stays viable under tougher assumptions - a higher 15% (rather than 10%) discount rate and reduced trade volumes - which points to a robust, resilient investment.

Financing approach

The recommended route is concessional or blended public financing - sovereign-backed loans and grants - most likely through a joint-venture vehicle between the two national utilities. Potential partners include the African Development Bank, the World Bank and bilateral donors. A fully private transmission model is unlikely for a first-of-its-kind cross-border line, but there is substantial scope for private firms in delivery.

Where private firms come in

The interconnector will not be procured as a single contract. It will be delivered through a series of separate tenders awarded over the next few years, with different types of companies competing for each stage. The main private sector opportunities are in:

- **Feasibility study and environmental assessment (under way).** Detailed technical, economic and environmental studies, including the full Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA).
- **Design and construction supervision.** Conceptual and detailed design of the line and substations, plus an independent "owner's engineer" appointed by the two utilities to oversee the works on their behalf and confirm that milestones are genuinely met before payment.
- **Construction.** Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) that designs the works in detail, buys the materials and equipment, and builds them, handing over a completed asset.
- **Equipment supply.** Transformers, switchgear (heavy-duty switches that isolate sections of the network for maintenance or during a fault) and protection and control systems. Supplied either directly to the utilities or through the construction contractor.
- **Legal and financial advisory.** Structuring the cross-border joint venture, negotiating loan agreements and preparing the arrangements between the two governments

The package structure and timings above are indicative at this stage and will be confirmed through the feasibility and structuring phases.

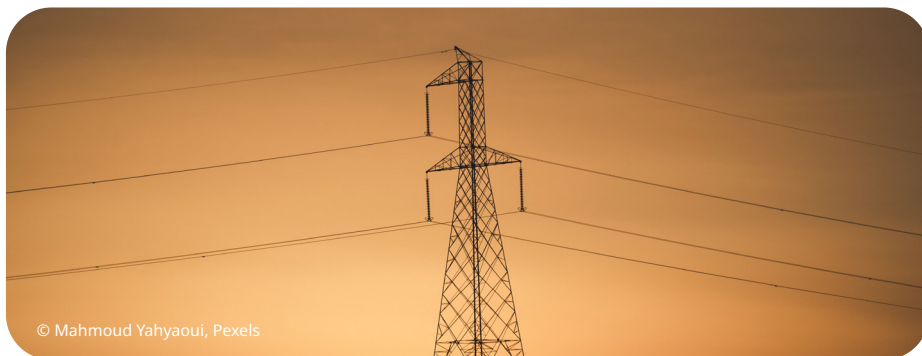
Roadmap and how to engage

Current status

The pre-feasibility study is complete (February 2026) and has been validated by the EAPP and the two national utilities, with final results presented in Burundi and Tanzania in March 2026. The project has now moved from long-term planning to implementation with funding and consultants being mobilised.

The five phase implementation timeline.

- 1 Feasibility study and full ESIA |**
18–24 months
Technical options, detailed CBA, conceptual design, route selection (under way).
- 2 Project structuring |**
6 months
Split into components, assign roles, implementation arrangements.
- 3 Transaction and financial close |**
9–12 months
Loan agreements, legal documentation, financial close.
- 4 Tendering |**
18–24 months
Public procurement, procurement specialists, engineer oversight.
- 5 Construction and commissioning |**
~2 years
Build and energise.



Governance

The two governments will establish a Joint Steering Committee (energy ministries and utilities) and a Project Management Unit, with REGIDESO (Burundi) and TANESCO (Tanzania) as implementing agencies. AUDA-NEPAD and the EAPP coordinate at the continental and regional levels.

Indicative opportunity windows

Feasibility and advisory services: now to near-term.

Engineering, Procurement and Construction, and equipment supply: Indicatively around 2028–2029, following feasibility and tendering.

Timings are indicative and depend on financing and approvals.

Corridor and community

The project is designed to leave more than a power line: local employment targets, skills and apprenticeship programmes, local-content sourcing, and corridor development — rural electrification and economic hubs along the route — so communities benefit directly.

CEPA is funded by the European Union under the Global Gateway Investment Strategy and implemented under the leadership of the African Union Commission (AUC–DIE), AUDA-NEPAD and AFREC. A Global Gateway and Team Europe initiative, in partnership with the African Union.

Follow the programme