The volume, edited by Aminata Fall and Reinhard Haas\(^2\), sets to demonstrate how this is possible, collecting studies and research contributions developed through the Sustainable Energy Access for Sustainable Cities (Sea4cities) project. It is an academic partnership between Ecole Polytechnique Thies (Senegal) and Technische Universität of Vienna, funded by ADA (Austria Development Agency), the Austrian agency for development cooperation, within the APPEAR program (Austrian Partnership Programme in Higher Education and Research for Development), which has the aim of strengthening the institutional capacities in higher education, research and management in developing areas by supporting research agreements between Austrian and local academic institutions and PhD scholarships as a contribution to effective and sustainable reduction of poverty. Sea4cities, featuring an innovative paradigm evolution in terms of epistemological and methodological approaches, allows local and European organizations to work together in a process of mutual growth and exchange and share different skills, learning from experiences, which are all convened in a platform for disseminating knowledge in order to lay the foundations for an autonomous development path in the territories covered by the research.

In this sense, the goal of extending sustainable energy access is understood as inseparable from inclusive knowledge, equal opportunities in education, peacebuilding and democratisation overcoming conflicts through forms of participatory governance by local communities and the adoption of appropriate technological innovations.

With an original approach to the current literature on the subject, more oriented to rural or remote areas lacking infrastructures, the research deals with the issue of accessibility to sustainable energy in urban areas of sub-Saharan Africa with a focus on Senegal, stemming from the prospects of urban growth also in these contexts. Different scenarios for SDG 7 implementation are analysed, studied, and evaluated with respect to feasibility in the various dimensions, not only technical or economic but also social and institutional, identifying risks, potentials, and limits. Accordingly, the study sets out to overcome barriers, starting from a deep understanding of the characters of the specific contexts, where the most advanced experiences conducted in industrialized countries do not represent a model but a reference, a set of methodologies that must...
be interpreted and adapted to the local reality. It is an all-round exploration that identifies and attempts to resolve recurring problems both with direct basic measures and with a long-term vision of the sustainable development of the place.

Within the collective book, the individual contributions are organized according to three themes: a first section deals with governance and the definition of suitable policies for accessibility to sustainable energy, identifying local municipalities as the main driver for change and thus the need for political reforms to engage and empower communities to take a leading role in delivering energy transition. It is in fact in cities, through a bottom-up participatory approach, but mainly through the integration with the economic, social, and urban/geo-graphic features of the areas, that is possible to define an adequate and feasible development path through a distributed production of clean energy.

Moreover, technologies are evaluated, not relying on the importation of innovations tout court – often resulting from substantial but not targeted or adequate donations from international cooperation – but rather assessing the possible energy sources, the infrastructural barriers and the application of appropriate planning tools and the test of new simulation software.

Finally, the social aspect is considered, through campaigns of questionnaires and interviews to understand the potential for behavioural change, consumption patterns, citizens’ perception, and commitment to initiatives in ecological transition in order to define communication tools or incentives to engage them in adopting new virtuous attitudes.

It is in this inclusive approach, in the awareness of having to manage the multidimensional nature (institutional, economic, social, cultural, and spatial physical) of the energy issue that the book offers an interesting and original contribution to contemporary debate on the green transition. In fact, energy sustainability is understood as the confluence of respect for the environment, economic accessibility, and social acceptability, while often in the past research focused on only one of the aspects, neglecting the fundamental nexus. Accordingly, although the studies and proposals collected do not address the complexity of the relationship between energy infrastructures and the landscape in the variety of the design aspects at the different scales, the multifunctionality goal and the systemic approach adopted to activate both material and immaterial syner-

PART 1

1 https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal7 (accessed on 05/04/2023).
2 Coordinator of SEA4cities and head of the Energy Economics Group respectively at the Vienna University of Technology.

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