

Morocco raises 1.7 bn euros for solar plants

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A worker stands in front of a solar array that is part of the Noor 1 solar power project in Ouarzazate on October 19, 2014

Morocco has raised more than \$2 billion (1.7 billion euros) for the next phase of a huge solar energy project, officials said on Friday.

The funds are being provided by international organisations including the World Bank and the European Investment Bank as part of a multi-billion-euro bid to help Morocco produce [renewable energy](#).

The first phase of the Noor 1 project is already under construction at a cost of 600 million euros in the southern desert city of Ouarzazate, and is due to begin operating in October 2015.

Noor 1 will be the North African country's first solar energy plant, with a capacity to generate 160 megawatts.

Construction of the second phase—Noor 2 and Noor 3—is set to begin "within eight to 10 weeks" and last for around 30 months, said Mustapha Bakkoury, the head of Morocco's MASEN solar energy agency.

He said a call for tenders had attracted seven firms, including from France, Spain and Saudi Arabia. The winner will be announced within days, he added.

The third phase of the solar park—Noor 4—will also be at Ouarzazate.

Morocco, which has scarce oil and gas reserves, is also planning a string of wind farms along its Atlantic coast in a bid to raise [renewable energy production](#) to 42 percent of its total power supply.

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