After some thoughts….

I would say “people”.

I apologized for not having a traditional answer to the question, and I will try to give some rational…

From the technical perspective, “one solution does not fit all” and the boundary conditions of the local context deeply change the final solution. So WHICH is the best REs Technology strongly depends on WHERE we are and widen across many conditions, including availability of specific resources, affordability of technologies, local economy, enabling policies, cultural attitude and behavioral patterns.

In urban areas, the penetration of renewable energies which is supposed to make energy more reliable, efficient, affordable, clean and safe must also respond to the needs and capacities of people and have to be absorbed within the local culture, adapted or even improved in the long run by the people themselves. For this reason, people should be at the center of any strategy. The centrality of human capital is fully highlighted into the Agenda 2030 since breakthrough innovation and shared knowledge, as well as new competences, capacities and skills are deeply needed to cope with the today’s energy challenge at global level, including urban areas, informal settlement and rural areas.

Nevertheless, over the last decade, the debate have tended to lean mostly on technology, finance, and policy as key drivers to promote renewables energies penetration in the different scaled of sustainable energy development. A deep step change is required and a more and more people-oriented and people-driven approach needs to be designed for long term sustainability of energy solutions.

Capacity building needs to go beyond the simple matter of adding a training component in any action and needs to be design fully to deploy the power of human capital as the true engine of the needed transformative path able to valorize local ownership, promoting economic development and guarantying long-term impact.

HOW a capacity building program for the comprehensive domain of competences required in the energy sector at the urban scale, should be organized into a multi-level mix of strategies specifically tailored for different targets and diverse skills, is not a matter that can be here briefly discussed since it require some further reasoning.

At any rate, investing and promoting Joint University Program to build a multidisciplinary capacity for engineers and technicians in developing countries may be a good starting point to create technologies that are locally adapted while contributing to empower the local Higher Education Institution. If the HEIs do not act in isolation, the investment returns to the society since a flux of knowledge and expertise from the HEIs to the local community is activated. HEIs may cooperate with local civil society in Technical Vocational programs or with local authorities or municipalities to promote institutional building for decision makers or energy planners

Investing in human capital for promoting sustainable energy strategies in urban area is always a good deal, no matter of the boundary conditions.