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Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

United Nations Development Account Project (UNDA) on Building Capacities in Developing Appropriate Green Technologies for Improving the Livelihood of Rural Communities in the ESCWA Region

Expert Group Meeting on Promoting Market-Driven Access to Sustainable Modern Energy Services in the Arab Rural Regions
Beirut, 18-19 April 2016

AGENDA

Monday, 18 April 2016

8:30 – 9:00	<p>Registration Please bring your passport, visa stamp and airline ticket stub with you to the meeting.</p>
9:00 – 10:00	<p>Opening and Introduction <u>Moderator: Ms. Radia Sedaoui, Chief, Energy Section, Sustainable Development Policies Division (SDPD), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Roula Majdalani, Director, Sustainable Development Policies Division, ESCWA • <u>Objective and expected outcomes of the UNDA Project</u> – Mr. Imad Sleiman, Project Coordinator, Energy Section, Sustainable Development Policies Division, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) <p>Tour de Table</p>
10:00 – 11:15	<p>Session 1: Participatory development in Arab rural context</p> <p><i>Historically land use in rural areas was not restricted to agriculture, and people performed different occupations contributing to a diversified and more sustainable rural economy. However the ascendancy and diversification of urban economies prompted increased rural to urban migration exacerbating the economic regression in rural regions. Moreover most national rural development policies and strategies have confined public interventions to the agricultural use of the land thus weakening further most non-agricultural activities in rural areas.</i></p> <p><i>When we use the term development it implies the notion of a need for progress. It tends to negate the existence of developed communities with traditional cultures and customs and native wisdoms. Some authors¹ rather prefer using the term redevelopment to describe a transformative process for rural economies from mainly agricultural based into more</i></p>

¹ K. Van Asshe and A.K. Hornidge, “Rural Development – Knowledge and expertise in governance”, Wageningen Academic Publishers, 2015

diversified, sustainable and resilient economies.

It is important to recognize the symbiotic relation between rural and urban, one growing increasingly dependent on the other, with estimated 70 per cent of the world population living in urban areas by 2050. Urban food security is becoming increasingly dependent on the local rural communities, while the opportunities found in the growing urban sectors can be translated into higher rural incomes.

Moderator: Mr. George Nasr, Sustainable Development Expert, Canada

- Ways to address stakeholder and energy power in rural development, Mr. Olivier Dubois, Senior Natural Resources Officer (Energy), Climate and Environment Division, UN FAO, Italy
- Putting the donkey before the cart: Participatory models for the rural MENA, Mr. Shadi Hamadeh, Director, Environment and Sustainable Development Unit (ESDU), American University of Beirut, Ms. Salwa Tohme Tawk, Community Development Expert, ESDU, Lebanese University, Lebanon

Discussion

11:15 – 11:45

Coffee break

11:45 – 13:15

Session 2: Energy for improving rural livelihoods - regulatory frameworks and institutional models in the Arab and other countries

While access to energy does not guarantee better livelihood for rural areas, energy is essential for rural economic and social development. However there are many barriers to the dissemination of RE technologies in rural areas. High on the list is the upfront cost of RE technologies which is beyond the reach of most rural people. The importance of developing financing and investment policies for the benefit of rural communities is crucial to the penetration of RE technologies in rural areas.

- *Are there energy investment policies specific to rural areas at national and/or international level?*
- *How can governments in the Arab region intervene to improve the RE technology financing situation in rural areas?*
- *What tools and measures can governments use to make a difference?*

Moderator: Ms. Carole Nakhle, International Expert on Energy Economics

- Renewable energy policies and regulation in Jordan electricity sector, Ms. Wijdan Alrabadi, Commissioner & General Secretary of the Commission, Energy & Minerals Regulatory Commission, Jordan
- Mobilizing private finance - The Success of RE projects in Bangladesh, Mr. S.M. Monirul Islam, Deputy CEO and Chief Financial Officer, Infrastructure Development Company Limited (IDCOL), Bangladesh
- Renewable energy : Reaching rural areas in Jordan, Ms. Hala Zawati, CEO, Jordan Strategy Forum, Jordan
- Strengthening local institutions for integrated and sustainable energy delivery: Lesotho Case Study, Mr. Monga Mehlwana, Economic Affairs Officer,

Industrialization and Infrastructure Section, Regional Integration and Trade Division, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (no presentation).

Discussion

13:15 – 14:30

Lunch Break

14:30 – 16:00

Session 3: Funding mechanisms for rural development (international, regional & national)

Middle income and lower middle income countries need funding to promote RE penetration in rural areas. Governments seeking funding must have the capacity to conceive a viable development programme for rural areas based on valid need assessments, to estimate the cost and to produce a comprehensive business plan including a credible implementation plan. On the other hand international and regional development funding institutions tend to prioritize the sectors they want to fund, and not all funding institutions cater for rural development.

- *What steps should governments take in approaching funding institutions?*
- *What institutional structures should governments have in place for sustainably managing received funds?*
- *On what criteria do funding institutions weigh their funding approval decisions?*
- *What financial mechanisms work better for RE development in rural areas at the national level?*
- *How do we define the need and type of funding once the barriers to rural RE access development and the instruments available to deal with these barriers are identified?*

Moderator: Mr. Ian Walker, Executive Director, Windsor Energy Group

- Opportunities and challenges for investing in sustainable energy in the Pan-Arab World, Mr. Ahmed Badr, Executive Director, Regional Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (RCREEE), Egypt
- Rural RE projects' financing and sustainable development – Examples of business models in the Arab region, Ms. Amel Bida, Senior Sustainable Energy Policies Expert, Tunisia
- Funding mechanisms for RE rural development: Which instruments?, Mr. Sami Marrouki, CEO, ECO-ser, Tunisia

Discussion

16:00 – 16:15

First day wrap up

Tuesday, 19 April 2016

9:00 – 10:30

Session 4: Local financing mechanisms

For the funding to reach its intended beneficiaries in rural areas sustainable financial institutions must have setting at the local level to service the rural communities. However, national banks have little interests in expanding their operations to disperse and impoverished rural communities, and creating public institutions for the purpose of distributing loans will unlikely reach the operational effectiveness of the private financial institutions.

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- *In addition to servicing and distributing small loans to dispersed rural communities, what other roles can microfinance institutions (MFI) assume in promoting RE penetration?*
 - *How can the public sector support MFI toward these ends?*
 - *What capacities are needed for MFI to be able to assess and evaluate relevant RE projects?*

Moderator: Mr. Imad Hamze, Community Development Expert, Lebanon

- Creating access to renewable energy: experiences of Grameen Shakti, Bangladesh, Ms. Nurjahan Begum, Managing Director, Grameen Shakti, Bangladesh
- Microfinance and access to renewable energy technologies, Mr. Bachar Kouwatly, General Manager, Ibda'a Microfinance, Lebanon
- The impact of productive uses on financing decentralised solutions, Ms. Diala Hawila, Associate Programme Officer, IRENA, UAE
- Financing of community development, Ms. Bettina Bastian, American University of Beirut, Lebanon

Discussion

10:30 – 11:00

Coffee Break

11:00 – 12:30

Session 5: Instilling energy entrepreneurship within the rural community - assistance and capacity building assessment needs

In order for a RE technology market to develop in rural areas a number of ancillary services are needed for support, such as minimal technical knowhow on installation, operation and maintenance, raising awareness on the benefit of RE both at the level of potential users and traders, etc. Apprehensive about setbacks in budding RE markets, the RE infrastructure and RE market should be developed in concert. Setting the infrastructure with no clear timeframe for market development involves as high a risk as launching a market for RE technologies with no technical support. A balanced strategy is needed where both tracks are pursued in parallel. Encouraging local young people to take the lead in these activities will instill an entrepreneurial mindset which has the potential to open up opportunities into other sectors.

- *How do we start building the capacity of local rural communities to close the need gaps for trading in RE technologies?*
- *What would be a generic road map and priorities for such endeavor that could guide the implementation wherever it is required?*

Moderator: Ms. Radia Sedaoui, Chief, Energy Section, SDPD, ESCWA

- Energy service delivery approach for rural renewable energy entrepreneurship, Ms. Priyadarshni Karve, CEO, Samuchit Enviro Tech Pvt Ltd, India
- Enhancing capacity of the local supply chain to market and deliver sustainable rural energy products and services, Mr. Ahmed Medhat, Project manager, Bioenergy for Sustainable Rural Development, Egypt

- Enhancing sustainability of rural energy projects: Pro-Poor Public Private Partnership (5P) Approach, Ms. Jun Tian, UN ESCAP, Thailand
- Promoting renewable energy entrepreneurship in rural communities, Mr. Abed Elhadi Zein, Energy Expert, Syria

12:30 – 12:45 **Concluding remarks**

12:45 – 14:00 Lunch

Closing of EGM

Lecture

A lecture organized jointly by UN ESCWA and the American University of Beirut (AUB) is held at AUB campus on 19 April 2016 at 16:00. Participants wishing to attend are kindly requested to send their confirmation.

16:00 – 17:30 **Oil price fluctuations and future market prospects**

Moderator: Mr. Nasser Hotait, Board Member of the Lebanese Petroleum Administration.

- Oil price: how did we get here and where are we going next? Ms. Carole Nakhle, Energy Economics Expert, UK.
- Electric vehicles – a game-changer for oil? Mr. Ian Walker, Executive Director, Windsor Energy Group, UK.
- Natural gas market impact of oil price fluctuation, Ms. Radia Sedaoui, Chief, Energy Section, SDPD, UN ESCWA, Lebanon.