

Participating Countries

The 16 participating countries in this programme are Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Chad, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

Participating Agencies

The participating and supporting agencies in the programme are the World Bank, UNIDO, UNDP, UNEP, FAO, AfDB, IFAD, and ECREEE.



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GEF STRATEGIC PROGRAMME FOR WEST AFRICA ENERGY COMPONENT

Regional Project on: Promoting Coordination, Coherence, Integration and Knowledge Management

Background

West Africa is facing acute challenges in terms of access to energy at a cost, form, and quantity that will contribute to economic development. Nevertheless, West African countries possess an impressive assortment of renewable energy resources, including solar, wind, hydro, and biomass potential widely distributed throughout the region. These resources, if utilized prudently in concert with one another, could greatly expand access to modern energy services in the region, particularly in peri-urban and rural areas. Overall access rate to modern energy services is very low across the West African region thereby inhibiting prospects of developing economic activities, providing basic social services and fighting poverty. The region has some of the lowest modern energy consumption rates in the world with average electricity consumption of 88kWh/capita compared to the continental and global averages of 563 and 2596kWh/capita respectively.



There are significant energy pricing inequalities both within countries and between countries. Access to modern fuels for motive power and electricity in rural areas is particularly low since there are no decentralized energy systems in place. Household access to electricity across the region is about 20% but wide chasms exist between the access rates in urban areas that average 40% and rates in rural areas ranging between 6% and 8%. Wood fuel is currently the primary or only source of energy for the majority of the population in West Africa, but its use is generally very inefficient.

The gap between energy demand and supply, increasing dependence on thermal energy production, fluctuating fossil fuel prices and lack of regional energy trade threaten the energy security of West Africa. Over 60% of the community's electricity generation capacity running on oil. As a result, the recent unprecedented escalation of oil prices has had a devastating effect on the economies in the region. Despite implementing power sector reforms aimed at stimulating private sector participation and liberalization, National Power Companies (utilities) in the region have continued to be under-capitalized and to charge rates below cost, and hence have not been able to access financial markets for upkeep and expansion projects.

The global concern of increasing GHG emissions and accelerating global warming and climate change is another challenge. Root causes behind the climate change are the modern world dependence on fossil fuels, increasing energy demand, and at the same time the degrading capacity of forests to absorb atmospheric carbon. West African countries and their energy sectors are highly affected by the causes of climate change (temperature rise, extreme weather events and droughts). Adaptation measures and climate change impacts will have to be taken into account in energy planning (especially renewable energy).

Objective

The specific objective of this regional project is to improve the coordination and coherence among the individual GEF projects implemented under the Strategic Programme for West Africa's (SPWA) Energy Component and to contribute to development of regional and national renewable energy and energy efficiency markets in West Africa. The project is fully aligned with the objectives of the Sustainable Energy for All Initiative (SE4ALL).

Global Benefits

The project will support an integrated programmatic approach as promoted by GEF. This approach will accelerate the mainstreaming of renewable energy and energy efficiency into policies and investments in West Africa. It will deliver significant global environmental benefits in line with GEF focal priorities namely, climate change and biodiversity. The global environmental benefits will be delivered primarily in terms of reduced negative externalities (e.g. GHG emissions and local pollution) due to enhanced use of renewable energies in the electricity sector, improved energy efficiency in industrial, residential and public sectors, and sustainable urban transport systems. Simultaneously, it will contribute to the enhancement of energy security and access to energy services. In addition, there will be knowledge management benefits. These will include the collection and wide dissemination of best practices, lessons learned and experience on energy projects, and will provide valuable support for local policy development .

Coordination of the SPWA Energy Component

- The regional project is executed by UNIDO in partnership with the ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE)
- An institutional coordination mechanism will be set up at the regional level to promote coherence and synergies between the individual SPWA projects and other initiatives in the sector
- Four regional annual technical meetings promoting cooperation and coherence among project managers, GEF focal points and other key experts of the region will be organized
- Four regional annual Ministerial level meetings promoting the introduction of a favorable policy environment for RE&EE will be organized
- An annual report, addressing the progress made, and annual action plans, highlighting the regional issues of coordination still to be addressed as well as specific steps to be taken based on the outcomes of the meetings



Overcoming Knowledge and Information Barriers

- A web based Observatory for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency in West Africa will be established and maintained by ECREEE. The Observatory will provide decision makers, project developers, investors and other stakeholders with tailored information and planning strategies. It will boost knowledge management, networking, advocacy and strengthening of capacities on renewable energy and energy efficiency. A comprehensive library of reports, studies, policies, and GIS based resource assessment maps will be available.
- Publications produced covering good practice guidelines based on review of past projects and emerging lessons and challenges
- A necessary framework for monitoring and evaluation is put in place to administer the project effectively

Progress

- The ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency was established by the ECOWAS Ministers of Energy in 2010 with assistance of the Governments of Austria, Spain and UNIDO. GEF-SPWA coordination meetings are held back to back to the Technical Committee and Executive Board Meetings of the Centre.
- The web portal of the ECOWAS Observatory for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECOWREX) was developed and regional renewable energy resource assessments were undertaken
- The ECOWAS High Level Energy Forum, jointly organized by ECREEE, UNIDO, GEF and GFSE, is scheduled to take place from 29 to 31 October 2012 in Accra, Ghana. The ECOWAS Ministers of Energy will adopt regional policies on renewable energy and energy efficiency and launch the ECOWREX during the meeting.

Activities	Timeline	
	Month	Year
CEO Endorsement /Approval	January	2011
Implementation Start	January	2011
Project Closing Date	December	2014

Budget

The total budget (US\$ 1.49 million) includes: GEF – US\$ 0.7 million; Co-financing – US\$ 0.79 million. . The project receives further support from the Governments of Austria and Spain.

