



Government of Sierra Leone



Mano River Union Conference on Energy and Gender

“Women’s Economic Empowerment through Energy Access in the MRU Sub-Region”

*7-9 May 2013,
The Place at Tokeh Beach
Freetown, Sierra Leone*

Jointly organized by:



Supported by:



In the frame of:





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The Government of Sierra Leone, the Mano River Union (MRU), the ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the African Development Bank (AfDB) are jointly organizing a **Gender Conference on “Women’s Economic Empowerment through Energy Access in the MRU Sub-region”**, from 7-9 May 2013, in Freetown, Sierra Leone. The event will be hosted by the Government of Sierra Leone. It will facilitate the participation of the Ministers responsible for Energy and Gender in the Mano River Union (Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea and Cote d’Ivoire), the ECOWAS Commissioners for Infrastructure and Gender, as well as other key experts from the ECOWAS region.

The conference **aims at the adoption of an Action Plan on Women’s Economic Empowerment through Energy Access by the Ministers of the MRU and the establishment of the MRU working group on Women and Sustainable Energy.** The ECOWAS Gender Development Centre in cooperation with ECREEE will support the Mano River Union in disseminating the outcome of the conference across MRU and other ECOWAS Member States. The outcome will also be presented at the upcoming Vienna Energy Forum, in Austria, 29 May 2013.

The conference will feature a presentation on the status of gender mainstreaming in the energy sector in the MRU sub-region and a practical training on gender mainstreaming in renewable energy and energy efficiency policies and projects, with a view to equip participants with the necessary skills to contribute in development of the sub-regional Gender Action Plan on Energy and Women’s Empowerment. The Conference is also part of a series of events being organized to mark the 40th anniversary of the Mano River Union Treaty. The Treaty epitomizes the political will of the leadership of the Member States to promote regional trade and cooperation. The official commemoration of the 40th anniversary of the MRU during the conference will indicate the renewed commitment of the MRU leadership to consider women in development as it relates to their access to clean energy.

The conference is a **follow-up to the ECOWAS High Level Energy Forum, held from 29 to 31 October 2012** in Accra, Ghana. The Forum, which saw the adoption of the ECOWAS Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Policies by the ECOWAS Ministers, envisage that by 2014 Member States would have developed and adopted their own "gender-sensitive" national renewable energy policies which will contribute to the regional ECOWAS targets.

The conference on Energy and Gender in the MRU sub region will present a sub-regional Action Plan on Women’s Economic Empowerment through access to energy, while creating a platform for the establishment of a sub-regional working group on women and sustainable energy in the MRU sub region.

A. Background

The Mano River Union (MRU) is a regional bloc comprised of four countries in the West African region, namely: Cote d’Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. In 2010, the region had a population of close to 40 million people and a gross domestic product (GDP) of approximately \$ 30 billion. As characterized by most countries in the sub-Saharan African region, countries in the MRU are rich in natural resources but have high incidence of energy and income poverty.

Established in 1973, the MRU has served as a platform for active collaboration and mutual assistance to accelerate economic, social, technical and scientific development of the countries bounded by this union. One prominent area in which the MRU has worked extensively to foster development is in gender mainstreaming and equity in Africa; particularly for the empowerment of women who are seen to be lagging behind their male counterparts in most socio-economic indicators.



Access to modern energy services is an important aspect in which men and women are seen to be affected disproportionately. Globally, approximately 2.6 billion women rely on traditional biomass for cooking. Women and girls in developing countries sometimes experience sexual exploitation, including rape, while fetching firewood. Furthermore, time spent in gathering firewood means less time spent in value-adding activities. This dependency on inferior fuels, especially at the household level, widens the gender gap that exists between men and women as the roles associated with using these fuels fall heavily on women. Thus, denying women equal opportunities to improve themselves, socially and economically. Gender audits, conducted in many African societies reveal that at the institutional and policy levels, women and their energy needs are rarely well represented.

Clearly, in order to address the issue of women's economic empowerment in the MRU it is necessary to address the issue of energy access, particularly for productive activities in agriculture and trade. This is because most of the residents in the sub-region rely on agricultural production and trade for their livelihood. According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), trade provides women with 60 percent of non-agricultural self-employment in sub-Saharan Africa. These are estimated at between 70 and 80 per cent in West Africa. Addressing the energy component of agricultural and non-agricultural activities will reduce drudgery involved in carrying out these activities through physical labour, increase yield and the potential for income generation. Renewable energy and energy efficiency, the twin pillars of sustainable energy, can play a key role in this if, among others, the policy and institutional barriers are addressed.

The MRU recognizes that women's access to sustainable energy is critical to the development of the region's economy as well as to the success and sustainability of the SE4ALL initiative and the MDGs. The MRU is therefore committed to promoting the full participation of women as key stakeholders at all levels of decision-making for proper integration of gender perspectives in the planning, development and implementation of all energy-related dialogues, initiatives and policies to promote sustainable energy for all.

B. Relevance of the conference

The conference will take place at the background of **encouraging developments in energy access, renewable energy and energy efficiency in the MRU sub-region within the ambit of the MRU growth area triangle** which aims to achieve economic development which is socially and environmentally acceptable, pursued in a peaceful and secure manner, and leads to the full participation of the MRU in the ECOWAS development process.

Moreover, the conference would contribute towards the targets of the:

1) ECOWAS/UEMOA White Paper on access to energy services for populations in rural and peri-urban areas which foresees:

- The development of energy programmes which will focus on improving the situation of women, who are disproportionately affected by all aspects of poverty, most particularly health problems (arising from the difficulty of chores such as wood-gathering etc.)
- At least 60% of people living in rural areas having access to productive energy services in villages, in particular motive power to boost the productivity of economic activities
- At least 20% of new investment in electricity generation coming from locally available renewable energy resources

2) The ECOWAS Renewable Energy Policy which aims to achieve the following:

- The share of renewable energy (incl. large hydro) in the overall electricity mix of the ECOWAS region will increase to 35% in 2020 and 48% by 2030.
- The share of new renewable energy such as wind, solar, small scale hydro and bioelectricity (excl. large hydro) will increase to around 10% in 2020 and 19% by 2030. These targets translate to an additional 2.425 MW renewable electricity capacity by 2020 and 7.606 MW by 2030.
- 75% of the rural population will be served through grid extensions and around 25% by renewable energy powered by mini-grids and stand-alone hybrid systems by 2030.
- By 2020, the entire ECOWAS population will have access to improved cooking facilities either through improved stoves or fuel switching to other modern forms of energy such as LPG.
- The share of ethanol/biodiesel in transport fuels will increase to 5% in 2020 and 15% by 2030.



- By 2030, around 50% of all health centers, 25% of all hotels and agro-food industries with hot water requirements will be equipped with solar thermal systems.

3) The ECOWAS Regional Energy Efficiency Policy with goals to:

- by 2013, create the institutional basis for five priority regional initiatives, with the following concrete objectives:
 - lighting: phase out inefficient incandescent bulbs by 2020;
 - electricity distribution: reduce electricity distribution losses from the current level of 15 -40% to under 10% by 2020;
 - cooking: achieve universal access to safe, clean, affordable, efficient and sustainable cooking for the entire population of ECOWAS, by 2030;
 - standards and labels: adopt region-wide standards and labels for major energy equipment by the end 2014;
 - finance: create instruments for financing sustainable energy, including carbon finance, by the end of 2013;
- by 2015, begin implementation, in each of the ECOWAS Member State, at least one of the priority initiatives;
- by 2016, implement measures that free 2 000 MW of power generation capacity: the equivalent of creating forty virtual EE power plants, with a capacity of 50MW each, available to power development, serving new users and new needs;
- In the long term, more than double the annual improvement in energy efficiency. This would mean that each year, the amount of energy needed to produce a certain amount of goods and services would decrease by about 4%¹.

C. Objectives, Results and Structure

The Gender High Level Conference aims at the following objectives and results:

- Establish the Mano River Union Working Group on Women and Sustainable Energy
- Strengthen the capacities of policy makers and project managers to mainstream gender aspects into sustainable energy policies, programs and projects
- Present a background paper on the status of gender mainstreaming in the energy sector in West Africa, and the role of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies and services;
- Adopt an Action Plan on **Women's Economic Empowerment through Energy Access**

The High Level Conference will feature the following events:

- Day one: Case studies on Women and productive uses of RE & EE
- Day two: training on gender mainstreaming in sustainable energy policy, programmes and projects
- Day three: conference on Action plan on Women's Economic Empowerment through Energy Access

Training workshop:

The Gender training aims at the following overall objective:

- Create a common understanding and vision of gender mainstreaming in ECOWAS renewable energy and energy efficiency policies, as well as the MRU Women Energy Efficiency Action Plan and programmes & projects
- Improved skillset of the participants to integrate gender in their day-to-day work
- Draft action plans that participants can use within the context of the implementation of the ECOWAS renewable energy and energy efficiency policies
- Create awareness on the practical potential of RE & EE in women's economic empowerment

Expected outcomes of the workshop are:

- Understanding basic gender concepts and gender mainstreaming strategy and tools
- Identifying gender issues and entry points in energy efficiency and renewable energy
- Understanding gender planning tools to integrate gender in the work context of the participants
- [Draft] gender action plan



D. Conference Deliverables/Outcomes

- a. Background Paper on the status of gender mainstreaming in the MRU
- b. Action Plan on **Women's Economic Empowerment through Energy Access in the MRU sub-region**
- c. Mano River Union Working Group on Women and Sustainable Energy
- d. Conference Report
- e. Training Materials
- f. Conference Presentations
- g. Website on Women and Energy Network
- h. Official Launch of the MRU 40th Anniversary

E. Organizing Partners

The **Mano River Union (MRU)** is an international organization established in 1973 between Liberia and Sierra Leone. The Union was subsequently joined by the neighboring countries of Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire on October 25 1980 and May 15 2008 respectively, bringing its membership to four. The Union is named after the Mano River which begins in the Guinea highlands and forms a border between Liberia and Sierra Leone. The goal of the Union is to foster economic and social integration among its Member States. The mandate of the Union was expanded to include Peace and Security in 2000 as a result of the wars that took place in Sierra Leone and Liberia. This mandate has helped the MRU to coordinate all issues relating to Peace and Security in its Member States. After forty years of existence the MRU is now focusing on how it could economically empower its women who form over half of its about 45 million population. It is against this backdrop that the MRU is championing this crusade of women and access to energy by creating a platform for erudite personalities to exchange ideas and come-up with a practical tool in the form of a sub-regional Action Plan that could serve as the basis for the economic emancipation of the Women of the MRU sub region.

African Development Bank (AfDB): The African Development Bank (AfDB) Group's mission is to help reduce poverty, improve living conditions for Africans and mobilize resources for the continent's economic and social development. Since its inception, the Bank Group has given a high priority to assisting its Regional Member Countries (RMCs) in their efforts to provide adequate access to energy for all. Between 1967 and 2011, the Bank favored the energy sector by devoting slightly more than one-third of the total infrastructure commitments, i.e. 34 percent, to this sector. In order to increase energy security and reliability in its RMCs, the Bank's Energy Policy emphasizes the need to explore available sources of renewable energy including hydropower, bioenergy, wind, solar and geothermal resources, depending on the countries' endowment. Mainstreaming gender dimension is a key principle of the Bank's Energy Policy. In order to promote gender-sensitive energy development, the Bank ensures that (i) the gender implications are properly reflected in the energy-sector project cycle and (ii) gender-related capacity building and training efforts are adequately integrated into its energy interventions. Further information is available at: www.afdb.org

ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE): In order to improve access to modern, reliable and affordable energy services and accelerate the uptake of RE&EE technologies, the ECOWAS Council of Ministers created ECREEE, a unique regional renewable energy and energy efficiency promotion agency in Sub Sahara Africa. ECREEE started operations in 2010 with initial support of the Austrian and Spanish Governments and technical assistance of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). The ECREEE Secretariat is based in Praia, Cape Verde, and maintains a network of National Focal Institutions (NFIs) in all ECOWAS countries. ECREEE aims at the establishment of regional renewable energy and energy efficiency markets by supporting various activities to mitigate existing barriers for the dissemination of these technologies. The ECREEE activities include policy development, capacity building, awareness raising, knowledge management as well as business and investment promotion. Further information is available at: www.ecreee.org

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO): UNIDO is the United Nations' specialized agency with the mandate to promote industrial development in the world's developing and least developed nations. UNIDO is one of the leading agencies in the field of energy access, renewable energy and industrial energy efficiency. UNIDO's services include the execution of demonstration projects, policy support, and capacity-building in the form of local training, workshops and targeted publications. UNIDO has provided technical assistance for the establishment and operation of the Regional Centre for Small Hydropower, based in Abuja, Nigeria, and the ECOWAS Regional Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE). UNIDO coordinates the energy component of the GEF Strategic Programme for West Africa (SPWA) – Energy Access. In



Sierra Leone, UNIDO is implementing the project entitled “Promoting Mini Grids Based on Small Hydropower for Productive Uses in Sierra Leone”. Further information is available at: www.unido.org

ETC-ENERGIA: ETC Foundation is a not-for-profit organization that focuses on promoting and supporting global and local initiatives to improve sustainable development. Key elements in the ETC approach are sustainability of programs and their impacts on the environment. ETC has over 15years experience working on gender and energy issues based on its management of the ENERGIA International Network on Gender and Sustainable Energy (www.energia.org), as the legal host of its International Secretariat. Started in 1996, the ENERGIA network connects more than 3000 individuals and organizations across the world, and has an active presence in 22 countries in Africa and Asia. Over the years, the network has become the leading institutional base from which actions are taken to mainstream gender into energy policies and projects worldwide. More information: www.energia.org



**Agenda ECOWAS High Level Energy and Gender Conference,
7- 9 May 2013, Freetown, Sierra Leone**

Program – Tuesday, 7 May 2013

Case studies on Women and productive uses of Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency

08:30	Registration of participants
09:00	<p>Opening session Master of Ceremonies: <i>Jerry Tarbolo, Mano River Union</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Call to Order: Brigadier Kestoria Kabia, Ministry of Defence of Sierra Leone</i> • <i>Mano River Union Song: Millicent Rhodes</i> • <i>Welcome: Paramount Chief, Madam Maltida Minah V.</i> • <i>Overview of Conference and introduction of Chairperson: Naasu G. Fofanah, Presidential Gender Adviser in Sierra Leone</i> • <i>Chairperson's opening statement: Mr Oluniyi Robin-Coker, Minister for Energy of Sierra Leone</i> <p>Statements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ms Haddijatou Jallow, Executive Chairperson, Environmental Protection Agency of Sierra Leone</i> • <i>Mr Mahama Kappiah: Executive Director, ECREEE</i> • <i>Dr Yero Baldeh, Resident Representative, African Development Bank</i> • <i>Patrick Kormawa, Regional Director West Africa, UNIDO</i> <p><i>Statement of Hadja Dr Sran Daraba KABA, Secretary General, Mano River Union</i></p> <p><i>Statement from the Chair of the Mano River Union Heads of States Summit</i></p> <p>Official Opening and Keynote Address <i>H.E Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone</i></p> <p>Group Picture</p>
10:30	Tea/coffee/cocoa break/ Press Conference
INTRODUCTORY SESSION on Gender Mainstreaming in RE and EE Chairperson: Hadja Dr Sran Daraba KABA, Secretary General, Mano River Union	
11:00	Gender Mainstreaming in Energy Access <i>Sheila Oparaocha, Director ENERGIA</i>
11:20	Status of Gender Mainstreaming in MRU on the institutional, policy and project Level <i>Country Experts from Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire</i>
12:20	Gender Mainstreaming in energy for productive uses <i>Ms. Nilguen TAS, Chairperson of UNIDO Gender Mainstreaming Steering Committee and Unit Chief & Mr. Alois Posekufa MHLANGA, Industrial Development Officer</i>
12:40	Discussion
13:00	Lunch
CASE STUDIES from the MRU and other ECOWAS countries Chairperson: Rev. Mrs. Linda Koroma, Deputy Secretary General, Mano River Union	
14:30	<i>Case Studies from Ghana, Burkina Faso, Senegal, The Gambia, Mali and Nigeria</i>
15:30	<i>Discussion</i>
16:00	Tea/coffee/cocoa break/
16:30	<i>Case Study Sierra Leone</i>
16:45	<i>Case Study Côte d'Ivoire</i>
17:00	<i>Case Study Liberia</i>
17:15	<i>Case Study Guinea</i>
17:30	Discussion
17:45	<i>Wrap up and Closing</i>
18:00	End of day 1
19:00	Evening Reception (Dinner) sponsored by UNIDO



Program – Wednesday, 8 May 2013

Training on energy access and women’s entrepreneurship development

Training on energy access and women’s entrepreneurship development

Facilitation: ENERGIA International Network on Gender and Sustainable Energy

08:30	Welcome address <i>Mr. Charles Vandi, Director of Gender, Ministry for Gender, Sierra Leone</i>
09:00	Introduction: objectives and agenda
09:15	Linkages between energy access and the development of women’s entrepreneurship: challenges, strategies and best practice
10:00	Mainstreaming gender in energy policies and institutions: Key elements of an enabling environment for WED
11:00	<i>Tea/coffee/cocoa break</i>
11:30	Developing an Action plan on Women’s Economic Empowerment through Energy Access: An Introduction
12:00	Developing a Gender Action Plan: Key elements and Steps
12:45	<i>Lunch break</i>
14:00	Interactive working groups: mapping national context & identify priority actions
15:00	Plenary discussion: Results from working group discussion (10 min each)
16:00	<i>Tea/coffee/cocoa break</i>
16:30	General discussion on the way forward
17:00	Wrap up of the day
17:15	End of Day



Program – Thursday, 9 May 2013

High Level Minister Segment on the Action plan on Women's Economic Empowerment through Energy Access

Opening of the High Level Minister Segment Chairperson: Mr Oluniyi Robin-Coker, Minister for Energy of Sierra Leone	
09:00	Welcome Address <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Hon. Moijueh Kaikai, Minister for Gender of Sierra Leone</i>• <i>Dr Yero Baldeh, Resident Representative, African Development Bank</i>• <i>Patrick Kormawa, Regional Director West Africa, UNIDO</i>
09:40	ECOWAS Program on Gender and synergies with the ECOWAS RE and EE policies <i>Dr. Bolanle Adetoun, Principal programme officer for Gender and Child, ECOWAS Commission</i>
10:00	Presentation of the Background Paper on Gender Mainstreaming in the MRU <i>Ministry for Gender, Côte d'Ivoire</i>
10:30	Presentation of the Action Plan on Women's Economic Empowerment through Energy Access in the MRU sub-region <i>Hadja Dr. Sran Daraba Kaba, Secretary General Mano River Union</i>
11:00	<i>Tea/coffee/cocoa break</i>
11:30	Presentation of the MRU Working Group on Women and Sustainable Energy
12:00	Questions and Answers
12:30	<i>Lunch break</i>
ADOPTION OF THE MRU ACTION PLAN FOR WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT THROUGH ENERGY ACCESS IN THE MRU Chairperson: Hadja Dr. Sran Daraba Kaba, Secretary General Mano River Union	
14:00	Presentation of the final communique and adoption <i>Minister for Energy of Guinea</i>
15:00	Intervention by Energy and Gender Ministers of the MRU <i>Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire</i>
16:00	Wrap up and closing
	Closing statement: Her Excellency Mrs Sia Nyama Koroma, First Lady of the Republic of Sierra Leone
17:00	Group Picture and Press Conference
17:30	End of Day 3



*ECOWAS Regional Centre for
Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency*

*Centre Régional pour les Energies Renouvelables
et l'Efficacité Energétique de la CEDEAO*

*Centro Regional para Energias Renováveis e
Eficiência Energética da CEDEAO*

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